

Canzone dei 200

the Dunera Italians

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Canzone dei 200 was an elegiac song penned by Giovanni Baldelli. Eighty-five years later, the documented history on these pages, also 'a song for 200', honours the resilience and fortitude of the 200 Italian internees from the United Kingdom who were brought to Australia during WW2.

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Foreword

On 3 September 1940, two hundred Italians from the United Kingdom disembarked the *Dunera* at Outer East Princes Pier, Port Melbourne. These two hundred men had been arrested in Wales, Scotland and England on the premise that they were members of the Fascist Party or that they were of military age and therefore posed a security risk to the United Kingdom. Their journey as internees was complicated and left the men physically, mentally, and emotionally challenged.

The passengers on the *Dunera* were a mixed group consisting of German and Italian internees from the UK, German merchant seamen and mixed nationality refugees from Europe.

When the *Dunera* berthed at Fremantle on 27 August 1940, authorities reported the arrival of 2343 Germans and 200 Italians. At Port Melbourne, it was recorded that 571 enemy internees were disembarked for transfer to Tatura Internment Camp: 200 Italian, 345 German and 26 others (Dutch, British, Austrian). The remainder of the internees, the majority who were Jewish refugees disembarked at Sydney for transfer to Hay Internment Camps.

The history of the '*Dunera Boys*'- Jewish refugees from the *Dunera* has been thoroughly documented in numerous publications and on film.

The '*Dunera Italians*' were small and insignificant in numbers compared to the '*Dunera Boys*' and the Italians have left little in the way of a comprehensive and traceable legacy.

It is therefore imperative to create a written record for the *Dunera* Italians. Their journey begins before their arrival in Australia; on 10 June 1940 with Mussolini's declaration of war with England and France and ends when Romolo Chiocconi disembarked the *Asturias* at Southampton, England on 31 July 1947.

With the now passed 85th anniversary of the sinking of the *SS Arandora Star* and the arrival of the 200 *Dunera* Italians in Australia, it is timely that their story is told.

Joanne Tapiolas

3 September 2025

Arrest

Within fifteen minutes of Mussolini's declaration of war on 10 June 1940, Special Branch in London raided the Italian Club on Charing Cross Road while policemen across the United Kingdom began knocking on doors. The police had been given lists of 'dangerous characters' to arrest, prepared by MI5, based on membership records of the Fascist Party without distinction between nominal members and ardent fascists. All those on the list were considered equally dangerous. Forty six percent of the two hundred Italians sent to Australia were arrested on 10 June with forty four percent being arrested on 11 June. The other ten percent were arrested by 17 June 1940 with Francesco Amato, a London hairdresser and Adolfo Felloni, a Glasgow terrazzo layer, the last two to be arrested.

In London, police arrested the Italians as per the Metropolitan Police Districts (MPD) in which they lived. Luigi Beschizza was arrested on 13 June 1940, but on 11 June 1940, the police arrested two residents of the house in which he lived. Beschizza asked the police if he was to be arrested to which they answered 'no'. Two days later, the police returned to arrest Beschizza saying that they had been all over London looking for him. Lists had been compiled before Beschizza had changed address and his change of address had not been noted on the initial 'arrest lists'. An Australian newspaper reported one thousand detectives were engaged in London to question arrested Italians. Other newspapers noted that 700 Italian men and women in London had been arrested by 11 June 1940.

Across Britain violent and anti-Italian demonstrations took place with bottles being thrown and windows broken. Newspapers reported signs appearing in shop windows: 'British owned establishment', 'We are Swiss', 'This firm is entirely British'. Crowds of 50 plus people formed outside an Italian café in Wales which in time the police dismissed. In Stirling, it was reported that a noisy crowd of 500 gathered outside a Melville Street restaurant. In Airdrie Scotland, there was one demonstration of 700 people while in other areas, shop windows were broken and shops ransacked. Italian owned shops were boycotted. Anti-Italian riots were reported in Australian newspapers. It was reported, *Windows of Italian cafes in Soho were smashed with bottles; hissing mobs swarmed into Liverpool's Italian district stoning premises; and windows were broken in Italian premises in Poplar and other districts of London.*¹ Similar scenes were reported for Cardiff, Newport, Exeter, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Belfast.

Police reported that they arrested some Italians from their beds and many Italians were prepared and had already packed a suitcase. The men were led to believe that they would return home the next day and hastily packed a few personal items. Gino Guarnieri was told by a policeman to pack his pyjamas and toothbrush as things

¹ "Anti-Italian Riots Mark Britain's Big Alien Round-Up," *The Courier Mail*, June 12 1940, trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/40927702.

would be sorted within 24 hours. Gino Guarnieri was arrested on 11 June 1940 and would not return to England until 29 March 1945. Vittorio Tolaini spoke of his arrest in an interview with Alfio Bernabei. He said, *When war broke out with Italy, we owned a restaurant in North London and within hours, I can say about 8 o'clock in the evening, two plain clothes men walked in and said, "You're under arrest." They searched the premises, put handcuffs on me, covered up the handcuffs with a raincoat and led me outside to a car. Soon as we reached the entrance, I saw crowds of people out there, people I knew, customers, some were shouting abuse at me, and some were shouting, well good luck wherever you go. And they bundled me into this police car.*² Vito Gallinari had lived in England continuously since 1896, with the exception of 1907. At the time of his arrest on 12 June 1940, he had been in the employ of the Carlo Gatti Ice Manufacturers for almost 42 years. Gallinari was 71 years old when he returned home in 1945. With Great Britain at war with Italy, all Italians were deemed 'the enemy'.

At the time of Mussolini's declaration of war, there were c. 18,000ⁱ Italians living in the United Kingdom. All Italian males aged 16-70 years old either known as members of the fascist party or those with less than 20 continuous years of residence in UK were arrested. In total 4,188 UK Italians were interned which included 700 fascisti.

The 200 UK Italian internees came from all walks of life. Luigi Becci from Aberdeen, Scotland was arrested on 10 June 1940 as was Giovanni Lusardi from Bargoed, Wales. Perfumery agent and hairdresser Umberto Scaravelli from London, England was arrested on 11 June 1940 as was maître d'hôtel Ernesto Simonelli, also of London. Antonio Sidoli, a shopkeeper from London, was arrested on 13 June 1940. As Italian nationals, all were considered a risk to national security.

In August 1940, *Memorandum for the information written for the Australian Government* was forwarded from the United Kingdom per airmail via America to the Australian Prime Minister's Department. It stated, *The 200 Italians had been interned as members of the Fascist Party immediately after Italy entered the war, but had not been individually examined, and it is not considered that they present any special problems or much difficulty.*³ It is incomprehensible that 200 Italians who were not considered to be a problem were sent 17,000 kilometres away from their homes, families and businesses.

² Vittorio Tolaini, interviewed by Alfio Bernabei, London, 1986.

³ Internees from United Kingdom on "Dunera", 1938-1944, NAA:MP729/6, 63/401/122, National Archives of Australia, Melbourne.

Staging Camps for Internees

Regardless of where the UK 200 Italians were arrested, many of the men eventually found themselves in a transit internment camp at Warth Mills Bury, England. From his home in Glasgow, Rando Bertoia and his father were taken to the Strathbungo Police Station before being taken to Maryhill Barracks, then moved to Milton Bridge Camp outside of Edinburgh and finally arrived at Bury Camp. In Cardiff, Marco Gazzi was arrested and taken to a cell in Cardiff Barracks. Released from the cell, he was kept at the barracks for ten days before being sent by train to Bury Camp. Vittorio Tolaini was taken from the police station to the Chelsea Oratory School and then to Lingfield Racecourse where he was accommodated in the grandstand. Serafino Pini also arrested in London, was shown to a horse box in the Kempton Park stables. Nicola Cua was taken to the Vine Street Police Station in London then to Lingfield Racecourse and finally to Bury Camp. Giorgio Scola from Reading, Berkshire, England was taken south to Paignton Camp before being transferred to Bury Camp.

A copy of the MI5 list of dangerous [Italian] characters, marked for deportation had been sent to each of the transit camps housing Italian internees c. 21 June 1940. Camp Commandants had 24 hours to make selections. Rando Bertoia remained at the Milton Bridge Camp, Scotland until 24 June 1940. He recorded, *...chosen at random it seemed, I was transferred to Bury in Lancashire where we joined a few hundred other Italians from England... It will always remain a mystery to me how I was picked for The Arandora Star. Some were very old men and they were taken away. They should have been left to go to the Isle of Man. My father was left. But other old men came with me.*⁴

Giorgio Scola wrote in his diary, 24 June 1940, *On Monday morning we are roused very early and after the usual breakfast we are told to pack up everything. There are various rumours as to our destination. We, that is 250 Italians are taken in groups by coach to the station in Paignton.*⁵ The journey would take Scola from Paignton Camp in the south of England 440km north to Bury.

Lord Snell in a War Cabinet "Arandora Star" Inquiryⁱⁱⁱ stated, *It will be observed that, in selecting the more dangerous characters for early deportation, the War Office had to rely entirely, so far as Italians were concerned, on a list of persons drawn up mainly on the basis of membership of the Fascist Party. None of these Italians had any opportunity of appealing to a Tribunal against their classification. In so far as importance can be attached to the procedure of sending "dangerous characters" first, I cannot regard the method of selecting "dangerous" Italians as satisfactory*⁶. Among these 'dangerous characters' was an opera singer, a BBC radio journalist, a ladies' hairdresser, a bank clerk, a music teacher and a button dye expert.

4 Rando Bertoia, "Appendix Internment Testimonies," in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, eds. David Cesarani and Tony Kusher (Routledge, 1993), 230.

5 Giorgio Enrico Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, ed. Julian Scola (2024), 4.

6 Lord Henry Snell, 24 October 1940, Summary of the SS Arandora Star Inquiry, H0213/1722, Public Record Office, Kew.

Warth Mills Transit Internment Camp

Warth Mills was a disused Victorian era cotton mill which was used by the military as a transit internment camp. Referred to as Bury Camp, this barbed wire 'prison' had a capacity for two thousand aliens. The first Italian internees arrived from 12 June 1940.

The conditions at Warth Mills were deplorable, cold and crowded. Vittorio Tolaini explained, *Italian internees were dispatched to this uninviting, dirty, stinking and rat-infested place, which was surrounded by masses of barbed wire and heavily guarded by armed soldiers... There was very little in the way of sanitation; only a few filthy toilets and about eighteen cold water taps. Hot water did not exist. The few electric lights functioned erratically. The place was foreboding and unwelcoming.*⁷ Tolaini, with a group of young Londoners including Nicola Cua, made themselves busy with running rations from the Quartermaster's Store to the kitchens and devising ruses to procure additional rations.

At Bury Camp, Nicola Cua was reunited with his father. When Nicola was arrested, he had asked if his father was also on the list. Told 'no', Nicola had thought his father had evaded internment and was safe at home in London. In Bury Camp, Ugolino Giovine told Nicola that his father was also there. Nicola and his father, Giovanni were reunited and would remain together on their odyssey before returning to England on 28 February 1946.

Giorgio Scola's experience however was one of separation. Scola's thoughts provide important details about this next stage of internment. He wrote, *We are all longing to leave this hell and on Saturday [29 June] we hear a rumour that some are leaving probably for the Isle tomorrow... Later in the day just 17 from the Paignton group, including myself, but not John [Giorgio's brother], is selected to go with a very large group tomorrow after lunch...this seems a bit unfair – why separate us?*⁸ To many of the internees, selections appeared to be random, and men chosen simply to make the numbers.

The selected Italian internees were transferred to Liverpool Docks by train. In total, seven hundred and seven Italian internees were then boarded on the *SS Arandora Star*, a British cruise ship of the Blue Star Line. It had been converted to a troop ship and had seen her first war service in May 1940 evacuating Allied troops from Norway.

The *SS Arandora Star* was boarded on 30 June 1940 and anchor was raised at midnight. At first, the internees thought they were going to the Isle of Man. It was now for some internees, twenty days since they had been arrested and had hurriedly packed a few possessions.

⁷ Vittorio Tolaini *Voyage of an Alien*, (1986), 3.

⁸ Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 4.

SS Arandora Star

A luxury liner the size of the *SS Arandora Star*, believed the Italians, was not destined for a short voyage to the Isle of Man. Kept in the dark regarding their destination, rumours about sailing to Canada circulated.

The 'passengers' on what was to be the *SS Arandora Star*'s last voyageⁱⁱⁱ were 707 Italian internees^{iv} and c. 565 German internees and prisoners of war. Many of the Germans were young merchant seamen and it was believed that due to their experience working on ships, they were better prepared with life boat drills and for 'abandon ship' and procedures^v. The Italians, in the main, were café and restaurant owners or staff, shop owners, ice cream vendors and terrazzo and mosaic workers.

On 2 July 1940, c. 6.30am, a U boat fired a direct hit torpedo at the *SS Arandora Star*. It would take less than half an hour for the ship to sink. There are many books which best serve to provide the exact details on the sinking of the *SS Arandora Star*, and the loss of lives of its crew, escort guards and the German and Italian internees.

Survivors of this tragic maritime incident have clear memories of how they endeavoured to get up on deck and into the water. The explosion woke the sleeping men, and this was followed by a loss of power. As the ship listed, doors in cabins jammed and had to be forced open. Keeping calm enabled men to find their way in the dark, up steps and out on deck. Angelo Greco (aged 55) and Giuseppe Pelosi (aged 57) both caterers from Swansea, Wales were in a cabin when the torpedo hit. In the darkness, Pelosi remembered a candle in his pocket. In Bury Camp, the young Londoners had stayed up late at night chatting by candlelight, much to the chagrin of the older men. Pelosi took things into his own hands and confiscated the candle. Greco and Pelosi were forever grateful to the young men because without the light of the candle, they would have found it extremely difficult to get on deck in the dark.

Gino Guarnieri remembered hearing a bang which startled him, followed by the lights going out. He made his way in the dark wearing only underpants and vest. He saw a boat lowered and then a rope ladder thrown over the side. Having difficulty in launching himself over the rails, he accidentally pulled back onto the deck, the rope ladder. He was saved by another internee who helped him and down they went to a lifeboat. A British officer set the lifeboat adrift partially filled and gave the order to row. At the time, Guarnieri and the others could not understand why the boat was not filled and queried the officer who firmly ordered them to row. Once the lifeboat was clear of the *SS Arandora Star*, Guarnieri witnessed her sinking. The lifeboat then picked up survivors from the water.

Filippo Guidobaldi found himself afloat drifting with the oil, bodies and other debris of the *SS Arandora Star*. He held onto debris until someone died in a lifeboat, and he was hauled into it. During those lonely hours, he had a vision of the Madonna. He would craft his vision in a sculpture.

Giovanni Marsella explains a little about his uncle, Adolfo Felloni and his rescue. He wrote, *I remember him speaking broken English with a Scottish accent and his speech was stiff. It was only after he died that I learned that this was because in jumping off the ship, he hit his head on a lifeboat falling into the water unconscious with a broken jaw. The occupants of the lifeboat dragged him onboard, saving his life.*⁹ Survival was serendipitous.

Luigi Beschizza was saved by mail bags, a piece of wood and a tabletop. Emilio Sampietro told a reluctant 22-year-old Beschizza to get into one of the lifeboats, but he chose to stay onboard not fully aware of the seriousness of the situation. He did however put on the lifejacket that Emilio Galante had given him in the cabin. Beschizza remembered his final moments onboard the *Arandora Star* with clarity. He remembered, *The ship gave a lurch and I started to run to jump overboard and I don't remember much else apart from a priest giving absolution... this was all so quickly, the next thing I knew, I was in the water. I thought of my family, said a little prayer and said ciao daddy, however I heard one big noise and I learnt afterwards that it was the boilers. When I surfaced, there were bodies and debris all round and I pulled my way clear. I saw a man with his head split open, his head was waving like a leaf of a book, and he was shouting 'aiuto', I felt so bad and there were two mail bags floating, and despite my lifejacket, I was so weak, I put one under each arm and then I was pulled onto a raft by [Rinaldo] Radice and [Renzo] Mazzolini, and we stayed on that raft until we were put on a boat and eventually we went on the destroyer.*¹⁰ Beschizza reflected that the time before he was pulled onto the raft was the most frightening of his life. He was alone and when he was taken down into the trough of a wave, without sight of another soul, the realisation of his situation terrified him.

Santo Stefani was saved by a miracle. He recounted, *I was lucky – he recalls – I was four floors below the main deck: there were eight of us in a cabin and we slept on the floor, on the straw. When we were hit by the torpedo, the electric light went out and we were left in the dark. In that hell. There was an incredible crowd: we were trying to reach the bridge and in that enormous commotion, all of a sudden, I saw a life jacket tied with a rope to the handrail of the stairs. I grabbed it and was almost lifted bodily upwards. The Arandora Star was sinking and by the time I reached the outside it was almost completely under water. I will never forget those poor priests...that they remained there, even if it meant death, and from the deck of the ship they blessed the castaways and victims, repeating the sign of the cross with an almost mechanical gesture of the hand.*

*I saved myself in those icy waters, holding on to a wooden board for hours, until a Canadian ship rescued us. Two other people were clinging to that same table, but they weren't as lucky as me and weren't able to resist. The waves dragged them towards the bottom.*¹¹ Like Stefani, many believed that luck played a major role in their survival.

⁹ Giovanni Marsella, email correspondence. April 23, 2023.

¹⁰ Luigi Beschizza, interviewed by Alfio Bernabei, London, 1986.

¹¹ Lorenzo Sani, "La Strage del Parla un superstite dell'affondamento," *Quotidiano Nazionale*, January 26, 2003.

Exhausted and cold, Nicola Cua and Vittorio Tolaini clung to ropes attached to the side of a life raft. A lifeboat reached them but there was no room for another two men. The officer in the lifeboat told them to sing and men sang. Tolaini was to realise that the singing would buoy the spirits of the survivors and exercise their lungs. Ingestion of seawater and oil was hazardous.

Captain Robertson, interpreter for the Italians saw the first boat on the port side overloaded. He reported, *I then proceeded to the second boat.. people from below were pouring up and when our boat was absolutely packed we lowered away. We were held first by the aft davit tackle and hacked ourselves free with a bayonet, then with great difficulty manning two pairs of oars we pulled slowly away from the ship. ..during this period there were no signs of any panic.. We numbered 58 persons and there was not an inch of space left. Our steersman was a member of the crew and our complement was approximately Crew 4, Army Officers 3, Other Ranks 10, Germans 5, Italians 35 (The latter mostly from the aft shed, Deck E).*¹² Rando Bertoia and a family friend were two of the Italians in Robertson's boat. The Scottish Italians, the majority who were sleeping in the ballroom below the bridge, like Enrico Casci, were first to the boats. The English Italians were accommodated in A deck cabins, several decks below the bridge and cabins in Upper D deck and lost valuable minutes in getting to the lifeboats. In the Ballroom, glass panels shattered causing injury to some.

Robertson's eyewitness account refutes the report by the newspapers that there was chaos and panic amongst the internees. He saw no fighting or struggling for places and no sign of any panic at any time. He reported, *All the Italians in my boat behaved very well and I would like to mention in particular Tenente [Giovanni] Borghi for his calm demeanour and Tenete [Francesco] Prosio for his cheerfulness in spite of a smashed finger. Both these gentlemen rendered assistance in maintaining a good spirit among their fellow countrymen. I should also commend very highly Signor Virgilio Bolognini who had two broken ribs. In spite his injuries he was able to cling to a floating bench and managed to grasp round the neck first a Sergeant, and afterwards a soldier, who were on the point of drowning and help them keep afloat. Provost Sergeant Riddler was also of immense assistance to me in looking after Italian internees*¹³. Robertson's lifeboat was one of ten which had been successfully launched.

Around 11.30am a RAF Sunderland Flying Boat approached the scene and dropped provisions together with notes: *Keep your chin up. Help will soon be here. Sorry can't land.* It continued to circle the area until the Canadian destroyer HMCS St Laurent arrived around 2.30pm. The crew of the HMCS St Laurent spent the next few hours rescuing the survivors.

From the 707 Italian internees who boarded the SS Arandora Star, 265 were rescued and 442 perished. Sixty-five Italian survivors were taken to hospital in Scotland

12 Captain F.J. Robertson, Arandora Star Conditions on Board the Disaster. HO213/17712, The National Archives, Kew.

13 PRO HO213/1722.

while the other 200 Italian internees were returned to Liverpool. Two months later, this group of 200 would arrive in Australia.

It would be sometime before the survivors would know which of their friends and relatives had survived.^{vi} From this group of 200, the following men had lost brothers: Emilio Previdi - his brother Lodovico; Marco Gazzi - his brother Francesco; Cesare Casali - his brother Giuseppe; Luigi Jannetta - his brother Orazio; Ugo Baccanello - his brother Marco; Antonio Greco - his brother Tullio; Giuseppe Rossi - his brother Luigi; Giovanni Moruzzi - his brother Pietro; Pasquale Pacitti - his brothers Carmine and Alfonso, and Sabatino Jannetta - his brother Vincenzo. Luigi Beschizzi's cousin Raffaele drowned as did Rando Bertoia's cousin Luigi. Luigi Cappuccini's brother-in-law perished and Giuseppe Pelosi lost his brother-in-law, Michele Di Marco.

Luigi Di Ciacca lost two loved ones: his 19 year old son Aristide and brother Cedisio. While numbers were counted and names published of those who lost their lives, there was no tally for the deep personal trauma the survivors endured.

Nicola Cua also remembered friends who did not survive: Carlo Delizi, Italo Traversa, and brothers Valesco and Nello Carosi. Nicola Cua and his father had discussed contingency plans in case of a disaster, as Dr Zezi had kindly confided that as the *Arandora Star* was sailing without escort, she was at risk of attack. Father and son then agreed that each would concentrate on his own rescue. Nicola believed that this is why his father was saved independently of himself unlike the Giannottis. Son Ettore Giannotti would not leave his father, Alfredo who was badly cut. Fortunately, Rando Bertoia's father did not sail on the *Arandora Star* but was interned on the Isle of Man. Both Giuseppe Martinez and his son Carlo from Southampton, England survived.

First rescued from the water by the crew of the *HMCS St Laurent* were individual survivors and those with poor support. Next to be rescued were those in groups of three and four. Simultaneously, lifeboats were emptied and the only motor powered *Arandora Star* lifeboat was refuelled, crewed by *HMCS St Laurent* sailors who were then tasked to undertake further rescues. An Admiralty notice published in a newspaper on 24 August 1940, stated that by 3.55 pm, 850 survivors had been rescued.

The crew of the *HMCS St Laurent* did what they could to make the men comfortable. Scrambling nets were thrown over the side so survivors could climb up the nets. After hours in the water, covered in a heavy oil with numb limbs, many others were so exhausted that ropes were tied around their waists so they could be hauled onboard. A tot of rum was given to the distressed survivors, broth and cocoa were distributed to other survivors, cigarettes were handed out and the crew found spare clothing to cloak them in. With the assistance of the *Arandora Star* cooks, a hot supper was prepared for the survivors, their first meal in 24 hours. The next morning a breakfast of porridge with sugar and milk and one egg was given. Robert

Welland, Rear Admiral, Royal Canadian Navy remembered that there were two Italian doctors in the group who no doubt saved lives. The doctors gave instructions to the crew to clean oil from the survivors' mouths and noses. Captain Robertson of the *Arandora Star* recollected that *when we disembarked at Greenock, each party, shipwrecked crew, escort, German and Italians formed up to march away and gave three heartfelt cheers for the St Laurent.*¹⁴ Italians remembered the kindness of the crew of the HMCS *St Laurent* who had treated them as survivors of a shipwreck and not 'dangerous aliens'.

The HMCS *St Laurent* arrived at Greenock, Scotland at 8am on 3 July 1940. There was much confusion on the wharf at Greenock. As news of the sinking of the *Arandora Star* was broadcast, relatives of the internees anxiously tried to find information about their loved ones. Scottish Italian families arrived at the wharf shouting out to survivors... 'have you seen my brother', 'did my husband survive'. Gino Guarnieri had a lasting memory of seeing a young girl crying, she had been told her father had died. Gino said his friends in London went to Whitehall^{vii} where a list was posted before they knew he was alive. To add to the grief and confusion, there had been two 'Bartolomeo Rabaiotti'; one survived and one perished.

Rando Bertoia recalled his arrival in Greenock. He wrote, ... *next morning, 3 July, we landed at Greenock in Scotland. It was a lovely morning and as the pitiful gathering of dejected humanity made its way along the quayside, someone in charge ordered us to stop and line up. This person, with a handful of papers in his hand, presumably a list of all the people who were on the Arandora Star, began to call out names. Sometimes the word- 'presente' – greeted his call and sometimes his call was greeted by heartbreaking silence. When my cousin's name came along there was no answer. I think I broke down then.*¹⁵

Around midday sixty-five Italian internee survivors were taken to the Mearnskirck Emergency Hospital, Glasgow. The other 200 Italian internee survivors were taken to Arrowe Park near Birkenhead before a transfer to the Drill Hall in Mason Street Liverpool.

Captain Robertson, interpreter to the Italian internees on the *Arandora Star* wrote about the movements of the men at Greenock: *[they]were marched off to a warehouse known as Joinery Sheds where they were kept waiting for hours many half naked and bare foot. Many were in a state of nervous agitation and protested against being herded between two lines of armed men. I was eventually able to persuade the Commandant to remove the guards from the room and content himself with sentries at the doors. By this time blankets became available and were spread on the ground for the internees to stand or sit upon. Food and tea was provided at last about midday and as I had promised the Italians that I wouldn't leave them until they had all been fed and clothed, I felt obliged to share their meal when all had been served. The matter next in order of importance was the problem of communicating with the families of the survivors and as soon as we arrived in the Joinery Stores I requested an issue of Field Service Postcards but none were available... About 16 hours later we were*

14 PRO HO213/1722.

15 Bertoia, "Appendix Internment Testimonies," 232.

recalled to the Joinery Sheds to meet Major General Borrett, and at once acquaint him of what we considered necessary. He at once acted with great energy, ordering the immediate issue of stores from Glasgow, and an issue of Field Service Post Cards.¹⁶ These cards allowed the men to inform their family that they were safe. Giovanni [John] Moruzzi's wife Maria received a card on Christmas Day 1940. Moruzzi had written, *I am well*.¹⁷ This was the first news Maria Moruzzi had that her husband had survived the *Arandora Star* tragedy.

At Greenock, representatives of the Red Cross met with the internees and provided the survivors with toothbrushes. Local clergymen came with clothing. A Greenock priest brought cigarettes, blankets, buckets, soap and towels. Some men remember being handed military clothing with a round patch sewn on the back. The men were given a corned beef sandwich and a cup of tea. Salvation Army workers also assisted with food and clothing.

As news filtered through, newspapers reported names of internees missing. *The Birmingham Daily Gazette* reported:

*Noted Hoteliers Among 613 Lost: A number of well known figures in the London West End hotel and restaurant world who were among the 1500 German and Italian internees on the Arandora Star are unofficially reported as missing. They have so far been unaccounted for among those known to be saved. Those who are reported as missing include: Italo Zangiacomi, general manager of the Piccadilly Hotel; Cesare Maggi, restaurant manager of the Ritz Hotel; Joseph [Giuseppe] Benini, manager of Hungaria Restaurant; John [Giovanni] Sovrani, manager of the Normandie Hotel; Cesare Borgo, manager of the Café Anglais; Hector [Ettore] Zavattoni, banqueting manager of the Savoy Hotel; and Primo Pozzo, chef at the Monseigneur Restaurant.*¹⁸

Some survivors were able to get assistance from their families. By chance, a guard at Mason Street recognised Vittorio Tolaini from a work connection. Tolaini asked him if he could telephone his family and explain his situation. Tolaini recalled: *The next day the guard confirmed that he was able to speak to my brother, who would come to Liverpool with clean clothing and other essential items urgently required. The day after, my brother Albert and my cousin Silvio, arrived with a suitcase of clothing and other essentials including safety razors, bars of soap and towels which I passed around amongst the others.... The telephone call from the English soldier was the first indication for my family that I had survived. I had been posted as missing.*¹⁹

Amilcare Cima told Dr Terri Colpi of his return to Scotland. He said, *At 4.15 the H83, "St Laurent" destroyer, came for us, picked us up and took us back to Greenock – the very place from which I had come in the first place! My sister came down to where they had us. She brought some bread and a few other items with her, but they wouldn't let her in in order*

16 PRO HO213/17712.

17 Stefano Paolini, *Missing Presumed Drowned: A true story of internment of Italians in Britain during the Second World War* (2015) under "The Dominions".

18 "Noted Hoteliers Among 613 Lost," *The Birmingham Daily Gazette*, July 9, 1940.

19 Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 11.

to give these things to me. Eventually, she made contact with a local lawyer who arranged for some clothes to be brought to me.²⁰ After losing all possessions on the *Arandora Star*, any assistance was welcomed.

Authorities showed no mercy or compassion to these survivors. The Italian survivors had suffered physically, with some men spending up to nine hours in the water covered in oil. Young and old were forced to ponder their mortality, to struggle with the shock of their experience and the loneliness of floating aimlessly at sea. Emotionally, there were those who lost family and many more who knew industry and neighbourhood acquaintances who perished.

From Greenock, 200 Italian internee survivors were taken to Arrowe Park near Birkenhead before a transfer to the Drill Hall in Mason Street Liverpool.²¹

In the business of war, decisions were made. One month after the arrests of Italian migrants began, the 200 Italian survivors were loaded on another ship, the *HMT Dunera* which departed on 10 July 1940. While waiting in Liverpool, some men had been led to believe that after their harrowing experience on the *Arandora Star*, they would not be sent out of England. Gino Guarnieri remembered that the leader of the Italians^{viii} put a case to an officer to not send the men out of England again. A verbal promise was given by the officer but the decision to board the 200 Italian survivors on the *HMT Dunera* was out of his control. (Appendix 1)

For decades the sinking of the *Arandora Star* was a forgotten tragedy. Rando Bertoia, one of the last remaining survivors was considered 'the custodian of the living memory'. Along with friends Nicola Cua, Luigi Beschizza, Gino Guarnieri and Vittorio Tolaini they worked with the Imperial War Museum to document the tragedy of the *Arandora Star* so that it would not be forgotten. Memorials to the *Arandora Star* victims can be found in a number of British cities including Liverpool, Glasgow, Middlesbrough and London.

20 Dr Terri Colpi, *The Italian Factor, The Italian Community in Great Britain* (Mainstream Publishing Company (Edinburgh) Ltd. 1991), 121.

21 Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 10.

Shipped to Australia

Two hundred and fifty-one German and two hundred Italian survivors of the sinking of the *Arandora Star* boarded the *HMT Dunera* together with 2095^{ix} European refugees. The *HMT Dunera* departed Liverpool on 10 July 1940. No consideration had been given to the plight of these shipwreck survivors or the refugees escaping Nazi persecution. Both groups were undoubtedly traumatised from their personal experiences. But to the authorities they were numbers, to be boarded on a ship bound for Australia.

One of the first indignities suffered by the 'passengers' of the *HMT Dunera* was a search for any items of value. Most Italians had few possessions as these had been lost with the *SS Arandora Star*. While in Liverpool, Vittorio Tolaini had managed to contact relatives who arrived with a suitcase full of clothes and necessities. The guards of the *HMT Dunera* snatched his suitcase, ripped it open with a bayonet and threw him a pyjama jacket. His suitcase and meagre possessions joined a pile of suitcases belonging to the refugees already on board. Luigi Beschizza's prized possession was a gold Hunter watch and chain which his father had given to him as a 21st birthday present. The guards snatched the watch from him as they did any money, rings, watches and items of interest from other men. Gino Guarnieri had his cigarettes confiscated including a half-smoked cigarette he was saving for later. Guarnieri hid his watch and £2 but eventually those were also stolen. Nicola Cua managed to conceal his ring, a 21st gift for the duration of the voyage. These random searches continued throughout the journey. When the searches proved fruitless, the soldiers would beat the men with fists and rifle butts.

Vittorio Tolaini recorded what amounted to an assault on sixty-three-year-old Giuseppe Spaggiari. He recalled, *...a ring was found on the finger of one Mr Spaggiari.. it was his wedding ring and a tight fit. The soldiers, finding they could not wrench it off him in the normal way, dragged him to the washroom and soaped it off. We found this elderly man lying on the floor with his finger swollen, bruised and bleeding.*²² The guard detachment to the *HMT Dunera* was seen as ruthless and callous.

The spokesperson for the Italians, Colonel Borghi^x complained to Lieutenant Colonel Scott about the unnecessary thieving of personal possessions. An officer came down to the Italians and asked that they place any remaining valuables in a cloth bag, and he would personally assure that the items were kept safe until the men arrived at their permanent camp. These items were never seen again. There are documents for two Italian who received compensation for losses sustained on the *HMT Dunera*. Dino Accini, a London café owner received £50 compensation while Pietro Gallo made a claim for £212/6/- for which an ex-gratia payment of £62/10/- was received. The situation for the Jewish refugees was very different. Nicola Cua recalled being given a job by the guards, *...they took us upstairs on the deck and there were all these*

²² Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 16.

*beautiful suitcases belonging to the Jews. There were three soldiers with bayonets ripping them all open and we had to throw them overboard... It was silly to throw all those beautiful things into the sea.*²³ In total there were 1600 claims, each returned by Statutory Declarations total £32,500 sterling;²⁴ individual claims for compensation for loss of possessions while on the *Dunera*. As survivors from the *Arandora Star*, the Italians had few possessions and little way of proof of ownership for items stolen.

The Italians were accommodated on Upper No. 7 Troop Deck of the *HMT Dunera*. The mess room was their accommodation space. Men slept on tables, on bench seats, under the tables and a small number of hammocks were allowed to be hung during the nights. While the area assigned to the Italians was cramped, the saving grace for these survivors of the *Arandora Star* was that they were above sea level. From the portholes, which at times during the voyage were open, men could gasp a breath of fresh air. Gino Guarnieri remembered the cramped conditions which had a profound effect on him for years. He felt claustrophobic, scared and suffocated. He thanked God that he was not downstairs below the waterline.

The latrines on this deck were used by hundreds of men; the number of latrines remembered varies from 10 to 24 but regardless they were insufficient for the numbers on board. Sea sickness, an outbreak of dysentery and the sheer numbers of usage contributed to the floors being awash with sewerage and the toilet seats smeared with faeces. Only two sheets of toilet paper were issued per man per day. The younger Italians and some of the German sailors took on the job of trying to keep the latrine floors clean because it was an area right under their noses. It was a losing battle. The air below deck was fetid as for most of the voyage the hatches were closed. The men were however allowed on deck for 20 minutes a day for exercise and fresh air. It was far from a relaxing stroll.

This exercise regime consisted of 20 minutes continuous running or fast walking around the deck in underwear. Lewis guns were pointed at the men from each corner of the deck while guards with bayonets fixed prodded the men along. If a man slowed down or stopped, then a quick smack with the butt of the rifle would be meted out. When the Italians went on deck for exercise, the guards would use the time to rifle through clothing, looking for anything still secreted. In frustration, the guards would do snap searches and when they could no longer find items of interest, they would beat the men with the butt of the rifle. Rough treatment continued until the *HMT Dunera* reached Fremantle, Australia.

The refugees onboard the *Dunera* experienced similar treatment. Alfred Lewinsky shared his reflections in his diary. He penned: *Soldiers are still searching. All razors are taken away. Watches. People begin to look for hiding places. More kicks and clubs and stabs. Soldiers come down the stairs. Drive us out. Kicks, shouts. Swearing. Exercise! Move along, hurry up. Who doesn't move quick enough old, feeble or sick gets kicks and hits with fists.*

23 Nicola Cua, interviewed by Alfio Bernabei, London, 1986.

24 Internees from UK to Australia (*Dunera*) PART 4, 1940-1941, NAA: A2908 P22 Part 4, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

*Bayonets everywhere.*²⁵ Another refugee Karl Guttman wrote about exercising on deck and the searches. He commented: *...we were permitted to go on deck for 20 minutes each day. There were sentries standing everywhere, and we were not permitted to stop but had to keep moving. Machine guns were posted at each end of the ship, and frequently the soldiers amused themselves by standing there, finger on the trigger, nozzle pointing towards us...Word had gone round amongst the soldiers that in spite of their thorough 'search' and close vigil during deck exercise some money, watches and other valuables had escaped them, so they organised surprise raids.*²⁶ The *Dunera Statement* reported that a Roman Catholic priest and a Rabbi were among those pushed and beaten during 'exercise'.

Facilities were basic and necessities were meagre. A bar of soap was rationed for every 20 men a week. Clothes were washed in salt water and remembering that the Italians had few clothes, by the end of the voyage clothes were in tatters. Fresh water was rationed to two to three times a week. Razors were confiscated so the men could not shave and itches and rashes while in the tropics became intolerable. Before arrival in Australia, a small number of razors were issued to tame a 55-day growth.

Details regarding the provision of food varies. Giorgio Scola noted in his diary on 11 July 1940, the second night onboard the *Dunera*: *At last plates, cutlery and dishes are provided and for the four daily meals I make it my job with another helper to bring down the food from our galley. This generally means queuing for about twenty minutes at every meal - the rest take it in turn to wash up with hot salt water under trying conditions. The food is good but badly cooked and though plentiful in comparison with past experiences, is still inadequate.*²⁷

A *Dunera* refugee Mike Sondheim in his diary kept a record of Mess Deck Menus for August 14 – 20 1940. Wednesday August 14: Breakfast: Oatmeal Porridge, Grilled bacon and beans, Bread & Butter, Marmalade, Tea; Dinner: Soup, Roast Beef, Green Peas, Boiled Potatoes, Stewed Apricots & Sago Pudding; Tea: Bread and Butter, Jam, Tea; Supper: Smoke fillet of Fish, Bread & butter, Tea.²⁸ This was after stores of food and fresh water were replenished at Cape Town, South Africa. In addition to meals, the men were given a ration of an apple per man per week and a piece of cheese per week per table group.

According to Luigi Beschizza, tables of 24 were formed. A table leader was responsible for ensuring that portions were equal. Petty arguments broke out over food and portion size, and one incident involved a younger Italian stealing a portion of bread that an older Italian had hidden away. Giorgio Scola explained, *More than once recently one or two of our group have come to blows over nothing and today over a matter of extra food from the kitchen which had been reported to an officer, and these were sent to prison for a couple of days.*²⁹ The Londoners, in general, were a group

25 Alfred Lewinsky, "Diary of Dunera Trip Kept on Board During Voyage", in *The Dunera Affair A Documentary Resource Book*, eds. Paul Bartrop with Gabrielle Eisen, (Schwartz & Wilkinson, 1990), 160.

26 Karl Guttman, "Life and Conditions on Board Dunera", in *The Dunera Affair A Documentary Resource Book*, eds. Paul Bartrop with Gabrielle Eisen, (Schwartz & Wilkinson, 1990), 170.

27 Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 10.

28 Mike Sondheim, "Mess Deck Menus on Dunera", in *The Dunera Affair A Documentary Resource Book*, eds. Paul Bartrop with Gabrielle Eisen, (Schwartz & Wilkinson, 1990), 202.

29 Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 18.

associated with the hospitality trade: chefs, waiters, provisioners and owners. To be without quality food was unbearable and acutely felt.

Another perspective regarding food supply was provided by Vittorio Tolaini. He wrote: *The food situation became steadily worse, with the rations getting smaller every day. This was difficult to comprehend, as often we saw the soldiers throwing food overboard. Such shortage of food led to desperate measures, being taken by the prisoners. During a period of very rough weather, one of the Germans went up to the gallery to collect the rations for his table and was given a dixie can containing some stew. He fell on the dirty, slippery stairs and spilled the food. Even though the stew became covered with dirt, those nearby made a grab for some. Nicky Cua managed to get a couple of pieces and after cleaning them as quickly as possible, shared the food with his father. I, too, was lucky to swipe a piece. We were so hungry that a bit of dirt didn't deter us.*³⁰

The spirit of the Catholics onboard who numbered circa 450 was lifted when Catholic priests Franz Girke and Walter Koenig were able to get a Mass bag on board at Cape Town, South Africa. The first mass with Holy Communion was celebrated on deck on 11 August 1940 as recorded by Antonio Dallanegra in his notes on the journey. Internee Max Meyer spoke of the feelings of *relief and deep joy* experienced by Catholics on the *Dunera* at this Mass. Professor of Music, Max Meyer was then inspired to write a four male part musical composition which would be known as *The Dunera Mass*. It was performed on the deck of the *Dunera* on 18 August 1940 and Meyer reflected, *Nobody who attended this Mass celebration will ever forget this solemn hour in their life.*³¹ Dallanegra's comment was succinct, *18 August Mass on board.*³²

While the first mass was not celebrated until one month into the *HMT Dunera* voyage, Catholic meetings were held previously in lieu of a mass service. Austrian refugee Christoph Wolkenstein wrote in his diary, *21 July 1940, I especially remember our good Oma's birthday and prayed for her at the second Catholic meeting on the Italian deck conducted by Fr. Koenig.*³³ Wolkenstein's diary entry and mention of 21 July 1940 being the second Catholic meeting alludes to a first Catholic meeting likely held on Sunday 14 July 1940, the first Sunday onboard the *Dunera*.

The *Dunera* voyage was a living nightmare for the German and Italian survivors of the *Arandora Star*. Foremost in their minds was the fear of the ship being torpedoed. Compounding this fear was the barbed wire and locked doors which stopped the men from free movement to the top decks in the event of a torpedo hit. When the men heard an explosion during the voyage and the lights went out, there was panic. Some Germans grabbed bench seats to smash down the door, a guard reacted and put his rifle through the hole in the door and fired a shot. Nicola Cua remembered this event as a time of panic. Cua was with his father, Giovanni and friend, Vittorio

30 Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 17.

31 Intelligence reports- Tatura, 1943, NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 2, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

32 Antonio Dallanegra, 1940, Diary Extracts, Tatura Irrigation & Wartime Camp Museum.

33 Christoph Wolkenstein, 1940, Diary, Private Collection of Anne Wolkenstein.

Tolaini when they tried to get up and out from their deck. Escape was impossible and Vittorio Tolaini recollected, *We were so tired of waiting that we said let's go down and wait for the ship to sink, what can we do? So we went down and just sat on the floor. After losing my shoes on the Arandora Star, I took my shoes off, knotted the laces together and put them around my neck. I thought, if I go down, the shoes go with me*³⁴ On 12 July 1940, two torpedoes were fired at the *Dunera*, one slightly grazing the ship and the other torpedo missed and exploded away from the ship.

Heightened anxiety and uncertainty remained with the men. Gino Guarnieri remembered that the thunderstorms in Australia would trigger a sense of fear. If the men were sleeping, they would instinctively jump out of their bunks. The experiences at sea left the internees traumatised. Santo Stefani's memory was that another sinking was probable. He recounted, *We risked being torpedoed. Twice. We didn't know where we were headed, we only knew that we could die at any moment. The priests, to make things quicker, had abolished confession before communion.*³⁵ The Italians' internment journey was one of uncertainties and trauma.

In the first days of the *Dunera* voyage, men began speculating about their destination. Heading west from Liverpool, Canada was discussed. When the convoy of the *Antonia* and a destroyer left the *Dunera*, Giorgio Scola was worried: *What disturbs a little is if we are going to Canada why don't we keep in convoy all the way? ... I notice that we are heading South or South-West, still zigzagging. This goes on for some days till, despite much scepticism and ridicule, I come to the conclusion that we are definitely not going to Canada! At last, nearly everyone comes round to this conclusion... Fertile imaginations, perhaps backed by something more reliable, suggest that we may be going to Australia or the West Indies. If it is Australia, then the journey may take two months - I can't believe it!*³⁶ Refugee Alfred Lewinsky noted that 17 July 1940 was the day the group were officially told the *Dunera* was going to Australia.

Despite the appalling conditions of the voyage, one Italian internee Giorgio Scola was able to distance himself from the terrible conditions and write about each port of call on the journey. 'Port of Call' was his article published in the Christmas issue of the Tatura Camp magazine and he described his first view of Australia: *And now we pass nearly three weeks fair and foul before our next port of call, which can only be somewhere in Western Australia, probably Fremantle. On Tuesday morning the 27 August everyone is expectantly waiting for the welcome sign of land and we are not disappointed: first we sight a steamer hull-down almost dead ahead and then a strip of land to starboard, this gradually develops as we watch, in size, and soon we can distinctly see a tall lighthouse standing on a rugged coastline, but as we come abreast of it, this land is revealed as just an island.*

It has developed into a fine and sunny day, and now we are gliding on dead smooth waters obviously into a natural gulf with land closing in to port as well; this coastline looks quite deserted and consists of sandy beaches backed by dense crops of strange semi-tropical trees

³⁴ Tolaini, interview.

³⁵ Lorenzo Sani, "La Strage del Parla un superstite dell'affondamento."

³⁶ Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 11.

and vegetation which is followed for some miles until at last we come in sight of the suburbs of a strange looking town...³⁷ It was remarkable that Giorgio Scola was able to find a different perspective to this hellish journey. Three days later, on 30 August 1940, Giorgio would celebrate his 24th birthday. It would have taken considerable mental fortitude to try to erase the hellish conditions suffered on the *Dunera* voyage and write insightfully about the ports along the journey.

While the groups of internees on the *Dunera* kept to themselves, there was interaction between the groups. Erwin Frenkel's memories of daily life for the Italians adds additional insight on the Italians' *Dunera* journey. An Austrian Jewish refugee, Frenkel wrote: ... *all day and every day [they] played the game "Terno" (a number game similar to dice but played with the fingers of both hands).*^{xi} *They managed somehow to obtain from the kitchen large supplies of garlic and onions, which they ate with much gusto. I suppose it was healthy but both their decks emitted vapours of both these fine vegetables: hence each one of us on the way to the upper barbed-wire deck rushed like mad to minimize the time spent in the gaseous clouds.*³⁸ Another game was mentioned by Giorgio Scola: *Scopa an Italian card game, seems to be the most popular way of killing time and many play nearly all day.*³⁹

The Italian doctors Dr Zezi and Dr Manzocchi were rostered for duties on the *Dunera* along with the German and Austrian doctors which brought them into contact with the other *Dunera* groups. Eighteen-year-old Austrian refugee Johann Pistori credited an Italian doctor, a survivor of the *Arandora Star*, for saving his life after he contracted dysentery. Another Austrian refugee Karl Guttman was treated by an Italian doctor, a specialist from Harley Street and survivor of the *Arandora Star*. A 'Rota of Duties' for internee medical staff, dated week commencing 18 August 1940, documented that Dr Zezi was on Sick Parade, Dr Manzocchi was on the Diarrhoea Ward and both Italian doctors were rostered for night duty. They worked with Bruno Breyer, Erwin Jacobsen, Augustin Schiehsel, Bruno Boas, Henrich Schorr, Günter Weis, Rudolf Danziger, Max Stern and Gerhardt Edel.

Dunera 'passenger' Mike Sondheim, recounted that there was constant irritation between the German prisoners of war and Italians. There was a common misconception by many that the Italians were prisoners of war. Sondheim commented that the Italians were pleasant, agreeable people with a sense of humour and whenever there was trouble brewing amongst the fanatical Nazi, the Italians had a genius for disappearing when the trouble started in their part of the ship. Furthermore, Sondheim recounted that on the way to Fremantle, a barber shop was set up on the upper deck at the end of the ship with four Italian hairdressers busy at work. Particularly noted is 'Two Ton Tony' who had been a cook on a British ship across the Atlantic Ocean and Tony was happy to be paid in cigarettes. Günter Altman also remembered the Italian barbers on the *Dunera*.

Interestingly is the recollection of Christoph Wolkenstein regarding the Italians and the *Arandora Star*. Christoph, aged 17 and his brother Oswald, aged 16 were Austrian refugees, arrested in Yorkshire on 12 May 1940. On 11 July 1940, Christoph wrote in

37 Giorgio Scola, "Port of Call," *Gioventù*, No. 14 (December 1940): 34.

38 Ben Zion Patkin, *The Dunera Internees* (Cassell Australia, 1979), 46.

39 Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 16.

his diary, *The pitiful survivors of the famous Arandora Star (16,000 tons) which was sunk on July 2nd in the morning the loss of 1200 lives ...We heard in due course all eyewitness accounts of the terrible disorder (here some points - no convoy, the Sunderland flying boat, Canadian destroyer, rolled like potatoes as ship whistled down, 7 hours in the water, former officers helped, nice Canadians, engine room, no struggling). Whenever we saw a survivor we talked to him about the disaster during the whole voyage.*⁴⁰ The gesture of talking with the Italians about their traumatic experiences would have been appreciated.

These reflections by impartial bystanders are an important part of the story for the *Dunera* Italians. While different groups of men were kept in separate quarters, casual interaction between the groups was noted and remembered. While the Italians were a minority group of 200, they were not invisible.

An official letter written on 27 August 1940 on the *HMT Dunera* in Fremantle harbour relates to an Australian officer's first impressions of the *Dunera* passengers. Captain Heighway from Australian Eastern Command joined the *HMT Dunera* at Fremantle. Heighway was in no doubt that Lieutenant Colonel Scott on the *Dunera* lied about the missing suitcases under the guise of 'containing rotting food' which had to be disposed. The use of words 'Huns' and 'Dagoes' in Heighway's letter is jarring and is unfortunately indicative of the general Australian attitude toward 'foreign aliens'. While Heighway was primarily concerned with the lack of documentation for the internees and refugees he also remarked,

*A short note to give you the picture regarding the conditions on the Dunera. What a voyage these people have had. The ship is hopelessly overcrowded... They have very little clothing. All underclothes are fumigated regularly and reissued but not to their owner, consequently everybody is wearing somebody else's clothes...With rough weather all the way, you would wonder how on earth they survived it... There were only two deaths at sea, one natural and the other a suicide. It's remarkable that there are so few casualties.*⁴¹

The Jewish refugees of Camp 7 Hay composed a memorandum: *Dunera Statement* addressed to His Excellency, The High Commissioner of the United Kingdom in Australia in 1940-1941 concerning the voyage and the treatment of the refugees and internees. If there was ever any doubt of the veracity of testimonials from the Italian internees, the *Dunera Statement* provides damning evidence regarding the treatment of the men on the *HMT Dunera*. Details are provided in a logical and articulate manner about embarkation, hygiene, searches and confiscations, handling and loss of luggage and treatment by military. Two events highlight the blatant disregard the guards had for the internees and refugees: forcing the men to walk over broken glass with bare feet on their daily exercise and forcibly and violently removing items like wedding rings. The damning allegations by the refugees, the many compensation claims for loss of valuables and the continuous letters of complaint written to all relevant authorities did result in a court martial for the officers of the *HMT Dunera*.

In London, in August 1941 the outcome of the court martial was published. Lieutenant Colonel Scott (now Major Scott) was severely reprimanded. Sergeant

40 Private Collection of Anne Wolkenstein.

41 NAA:MP729/6, 63/401/122.

Major Bowles was sentenced to a year's imprisonment and discharged from the army and Sergeant Helliwell was found not guilty on a minor charge and reprimanded on another. The *Dunera* voyage and the court martial outcomes became known as *The Dunera Scandal*.^{xii}

The voyage from Fremantle to Melbourne went without incident. Captain Heighway and Australian guards had joined the *HMT Dunera* for the last leg of the journey for the Italian internees. The consensus of the Italians was that the conditions improved; the food was better, there were no more beatings or rough treatment. From a command point of view, Captain Heighway found that the nominal rolls sent from England and the nominal rolls on the *HMT Dunera* were inadequate. He and his staff had to compile new and complete nominal rolls. Had the *HMT Dunera*^{xiii} been hit by a torpedo and sank, it would never be known the names of the men who lost their lives.

The lack of complete nominal rolls points to a complete disrespect for military procedures by the English officers and a lack of professionalism. As well, there was a shortage of documentation relating to the full details of the men. It was also noted in a letter by Captain Heighway that the 251 Germans and the 200 Italians had no luggage whatsoever. On the voyage to Melbourne, Captain Heighway then engaged the services of four interpreters of the British Guards to go to assigned sections on the ship and take the full details and fingerprints for every internee on the *Dunera*. Giorgio Scola wrote in his diary on 31 August 1940, *During the morning one of the Italian-speaking officers on board takes the thumbprints and personal particulars of all us Italians and Germans on board, who are presumably to be landed at Melbourne. Otherwise, normal, dull, routine day.*⁴²

Oswald Wolkenstein, an Austrian student explained further in his journal, *1 September: Fingerprints were taken and cards filled out for the Germans and Italians. Memo: Now we know quite definitely that we are going to stay in Australia. How long?*⁴³ With documentation completed, selections were made for those disembarking in Melbourne: Italian internees, German prisoners of war and a small group of European refugees and those in Sydney: European refugees.

Upon disembarkation in Melbourne, each 'alien' required a completed immigration form entitled *Form for Application for Registration (for Alien Residents in Australia)*. Attached to the *Form for Application for Registration* was a photo. Around the neck of each man was a sign with a number; the number represented the Certificate Issued No.... Vittorio Tolaini recalled that photos were taken in the first few days of being in Tatura with a sign hung around their necks.

The journey from Liverpool via Freetown, Takoradi, Cape Town and Fremantle took 55 days under hellish and at times inhumane conditions. Nicola Cua would always feel very bitter about the treatment of the internees on the *Dunera*. He could accept the sinking of the *Arandora Star* as a tragedy of war but not so for the *Dunera*. Morale

42 Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 20.

43 Cyril Pearl, *The Dunera Scandal* (Angus & Robertson Publishers, 1983), 154.

was very low, amongst the Italians especially as the days passed and the uncertainty of where they were going hung over them. The younger Italians were more resilient Nicola Cua felt, but he saw that the older men had all but lost hope of seeing their families again. Twenty-two percent of the Italian internees were aged over 50, among them Nicola's father Giovanni. Vittorio Tolaini ends his memories of the *Dunera* voyage with these words, *Thus ended fifty five days of Hell and whatever the future had in store for us, we were sure nothing could be as bad and cruel as our lives had been on the Dunera.*⁴⁴

Captain Heighway had sent a SECRET message to Army Melbourne which revealed some damning information about the lack of documentation and details for the *Dunera* passengers and the state of the health of some men. Interesting are the statements such as 'No documents for the Italians' and 'Ship very crowded health remarkably good considering.' Two Germans were identified as being seriously ill and in total 120 were sick. Ambulances were required at Melbourne port for four internees. The total disregard for military efficiency and attention to precise documentation for passengers on the *HMT Dunera* was evident. The British Military had failed these internees on many levels.

The *HMT Dunera* arrived in Port Melbourne, Australia on 3 September 1940. (Appendix 2) The day held special significance for Vittorio Bechelli, Giuseppe Dorà and Venuto Corinti. For Bechelli and Dorà it was their 41st birthdays and for Corinti his 26th birthday.

⁴⁴ Tolaini, interview.

First Impressions

The Italians' eyes were drawn to the Australian Guard Unit waiting in Melbourne for them. The internees noticed their bronzed complexions, imposing stature, guns, some with bayonets fixed and all looking with serious intent. The group that disembarked did not match the description the guards had been given, for before their eyes were dishevelled, downtrodden weary foreigners. The Australian soldiers soon found out that these 'dangerous enemies' were waiters, shop keepers, chefs, ice cream manufacturers and terrazzo workers. They were not fifth columnists, saboteurs, or spies.

The Provost Marshall and troops (military police) guarded the pier and the *HMT Dunera* in conjunction with a guard unit from the 12th Garrison. The Operating Command Troops from the *HMT Dunera* were responsible for disembarkation. Captain Bristow and 120 officers and other ranks from the 17th Garrison Tatura were the guard unit awaiting the internees at Melbourne and were responsible for their entrainment. They were supported by two Tatura officer interpreters and two *Dunera* officer interpreters.

The *HMT Dunera* was docked at 10.20am and the last internees were hutted at Tatura Camp by 9.30pm. As the internees filed past the heavily guarded gang plank they were counted. They were then filed into the waiting train where another count was taken. Disembarkation and entrainment were completed by 12.20pm and the train departed at 12.30pm.

The *HMT Dunera* voyage had taken its toll on the health of the older internees, some of whom were taken directly from the port to hospital. Twenty-two men (German^{xiv} and Italian) were transferred to Military Hospital Broadmeadows or Melbourne Hospital. The two Italian doctors Dr Gaetano Zezi and Dr Gerolamo Manzocchi accompanied the Italian internees taken to Broadmeadows. The Italians hospitalised were Caio Bruni [year of birth 1893], Giovanni Crolla [YoB 1878], Riccardo Massarelli [YoB 1882], Emilio Rossi [YoB 1881], Pasquale Pacitti [YoB 1889], Pietro Moccogni [YoB 1893], Pietro Gallo [YoB 1890], and Giovanni Cua [YoB 1885]. Four of the twenty-two men were taken by stretcher from the ship to waiting ambulances for transfer to Melbourne Hospital.

Each train compartment was guarded. Giorgio Scola wrote, *The whole train is heavily guarded by ex-service Aussie troops who immediately greet us more as strangers than as enemies. Even before we leave the quayside station, the soldier sitting on my right has handed round cigarettes rolled by himself to anyone who wants them. He is almost sympathetic when he hears our story. He, like many of the other soldiers, has no dislike for Italians or Germans as such. Neither does the war seem to trouble them very much. Like the others we saw at Freemantle, they are rough, big, sunburnt, good-natured men who are*

*broadminded and 'simpatico' on the whole.*⁴⁵ During the journey to Tatura Camp the tensions softened between guard and internee. The guards heard accented English: Welsh, Scottish and Cockney and the Italians experienced kindness in the offering of cigarettes and chocolate. They had not been the receiver of such kindness since their rescue by the *HMCS St Laurent*.

The train stopped at Seymour for 35 minutes during which time the internees and guards were given a packet of sandwiches and hot tea. At 4.20pm the train stopped at Murchison East Station where 11 palour coaches were waiting to take the internees to Tatura Camp. Once the coaches were filled they departed, while the remaining internees were locked in on the train.

The barbed wire fences, the watch towers with armed guards and search lights were the first glimpses of camp life in Australia. Tatura Camp 2 had two compounds, each capable of accommodating 550 internees. The two camps were separated by barbed wire fences. The 200 Italian *Dunera* internees were housed in Camp 2B and the 251 German *Arandora Star* survivor internees in Camp 2A. The other *Dunera* internees who disembarked at Melbourne Port were sent to Tatura Camp 3C. (Appendix 3 and Appendix 4)

The internees were unloaded from the coaches into their relevant compounds. The men's bags were searched before they were taken to their huts. Hut rolls were taken, the Intelligence Officer appointed temporary hut leaders and compound leaders. The internees were then fed a good meal in the mess. The first meal at Tatura was most memorable for the Italians. The men ate a big meal of boiled mutton and they were given a loaf of bread each. Luigi Beschizza kept some bread aside, after the lack of food on the *HMT Dunera*, he was taking no chances. The process of transfers - train to coaches to camp was repeated with remaining internees at Murchison East Station and by 9.30pm all operations were completed.

The next day, a thorough search of the Germans' and Italians' possessions was made with £739 discovered. The money was in English and Scottish notes and had been hidden in belts, the lining of clothing and within concealed pockets.

Dr Zezi was one of the fortunate few who arrived in Australia with possessions of any note. The *HMT Dunera* had carried Dr Zezi's medical books, as Zezi explained in a letter, *A small fortune in modern medical books, after crossing safely the ocean went astray between Melbourne and Tatura.*⁴⁶ The books were never recovered and eighteen months later, this loss still pained Zezi.

⁴⁵ Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 21.

⁴⁶ Zezi Gaetano, 1940-1943, NAA: A367 C75321, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Tatura Camp 2

The internal operation of the compounds of Tatura Camps was largely autonomous. The leader of Camp 2B, Colonel Borghi oversaw good discipline and order ensuring the smooth running and maintenance of the camp. The leader's role was also to liaise with the Australian Commandant of Camp 2. Colonel Borghi's credentials were impressive. He was, at the time of internment, Assistant General Manager for Pirelli Ltd in London. Borghi had served in the Italian army from 1914 and actively served with the Allied forces until 1919. For his services, he was awarded the *Medaglia di Argente* and the *Croci di Guerra*. Borghi was considered by the authorities to be pro-Italian but not anti-British and held the best interests of the men at heart.

Sleeping quarters were roofed barracks (huts) with bunks for 28 in a double bunk arrangement. Each hut had ten glass windows,^{xv} two doors and electric lights. Other features were items made by the Italians in the carpentry workshop: small tables, stools and shelving. Each hut had a leader who was responsible for the general order and cleanliness of hut: daily sweeping and floors washed weekly. Each man was given a paillasse and five blankets. The straw in the paillasse was changed every three months. Outside the dormitories the men took to making garden beds and growing vegetables.

The shower and laundry facilities of Tatura Camp 2 were basic but sufficient. In the ablutions blocks there were six hot showers, ten sets of hot and cold water taps over sinks, 16 cold showers and 28 cold water taps over sinks. There were 24 toilets and while the camp was not sewered, the pans were taken away daily. The laundry contained two boilers, four sinks and six sets of hot and cold water taps.

Colonel Borghi instructed the men in the areas of camp work that were obligatory and voluntary. Co-operation was essential for the smooth running of the camp. Some work was paid by the Department of Army but the Italians also saw certain jobs as valued and for which payment should be made. In time, the camp canteen operated on an average profit of 15% and this provided the funding for certain positions. The cooks and sanitation workers were obligatory positions but a decision was made to pay these workers from canteen profits. As well, hairdressers, tailors and carpenters were paid a small remuneration each month from canteen profits. As a group, the Italian internees saw these positions as necessary and valued. Remaining canteen profits were distributed evenly amongst each man. Other obligatory work was unpaid but voluntary work was paid at a rate of 1s/day by the Department of Army.

Men participated according to their expertise. Each camp had workshops for essential services: barbers, tailors, bootmakers and carpenters. Francesco Amato, Ostilio Notarianni and Luigi Jaconelli were hairdressers by profession and possibly filled the positions of barbers with Luigi Barbieri noted as being the camp barber. There were work parties for fender making, concrete block making, drainage work,

road making, medical orderlies, building: maintenance and furniture construction, administrative and clerical, and canteen operators. Garden crews worked on decoration schemes for beds between the huts for flowers and vegetables. Wood cutting parties for both inside and outside of the camp were required.

Most tasks relating to a self-contained community were carried out by the old and young. However, it was in the kitchen where the expertise of the Italian internees shone. Some of the finest Italian chefs in London were among the group of Italian internees. Most notable were Maître Chef Louis [Luigi] Vergano of Quaglino's^{xvi}, Ugolino Giovine of St Ermin's, and Cavalière Bartolomeo Calderoni of Quaglino's. Nicola Cua and Vittorio Tolaini recollected that Giovine with a team of 14 chefs and cooks created tantalising menus with the rations. Nicola Cua recounted, *When Major Layton came we invited him to lunch, at least the camp leader Colonel Borghi invited him to lunch. We said that everything on the table comes from the rations and he wouldn't believe it. We made a beautiful risotto and he said, I can't eat like this at the Savoy Hotel [London].*⁴⁷

Documented as working in the kitchen were Dino Accini (café owner), Pietro Strina (cook), Giovanni Battista Orlandi (café proprietor), Celeste Gauna (chef and butcher), Leandro Strola (restaurant proprietor) and Felice Parravicini (restauranteur). Thirty-three and a half percent of the Italian internees were café owners and restaurant proprietors who were likely experienced cooks or chefs. It is thought that Giovanni Negri (chef), Giuseppe Zanienetta (cook), Francesco Capra (boarding house owner) and Germano Molinari (chef) also worked in the kitchen. Other duties included kitchen hygiene and mess orderlies. Riccardo Freppoli (ice salesman) and Eusebio Bravo (chef) managed kitchen hygiene.

Some men like Gino Guarnieri, a café proprietor, took the opportunity to learn new skills from the restaurant chefs which could benefit his business, when he returned to London. Guarnieri remembered making gnocchi Piemontese, polenta Friulan and learning how to make a roast and sauces under the tutelage of the Piemontese chef Ugolino Giovine from St Ermin's Hotel. Luigi Beschizza, a caterer, and Pietro Beschizza, a waiter also worked in the kitchen.

Education and handicraft activities were offered to fill in time. Giovanni Baldelli was a school master with experience in teaching French and Latin in England. In the internment camps Baldelli offered classes in French, English, Spanish and Italian with Giorgio Boggio also teaching languages and history. Nicola Cua remembered that Dr Manzocchi from Shepherds Market gave lessons in Spanish and taught First Aid. Multi-linguist Dino Accini studied in-depth German and Spanish which he added to his knowledge of French, English and Italian.

Classes in Geography, German, Mathematics, Design and Hotel Administration were also offered. Additionally, drawing and sculpture classes were held. Antonio D'Agostino's occupation was recorded as sculptor and wood carver. He had worked under his uncle in London who was an architectural wood carver making

⁴⁷ Cua, interview.

bespoke pieces for a fine art dealer in London. Possibly D'Agostino was the tutor for sculpture classes and/or Filippo Guidobaldi.

Francesco Matania came with experience in music and visual arts. He served in the Italian army during WW1 and was awarded the title of Cavalière for his poignant sketches of the battlefields. Matania's love was music and he used his experience as an opera singer and teacher of opera to engage the Italians in concert and band performances. Known in the music circles as Maestro Matania, he was well known in London where he had a studio teaching the Italian method of voice training and vocal art and he had also established the *Matania Operatic Society*. Matania would find a friend in Umberto Scaravelli who as a tenor had performed opera in Italy and England and had been a member of Carlo Rosa Opera Company.

The camp had a piano and donations of musical instruments came from the Italian community in Melbourne. Once a month concerts and spectacles were held and Vittorio Tolaini remembered performances by a string orchestra. Ivaldo Antinori, a university student from Scotland played the violin while Colombo Riani, an ice cream café proprietor from England played trombone and Francesco Apicella was the camp bugler. Hans Heinrich Gurland, a *Dunera* German remembered joining the Italian orchestra c. 1943. He recorded, *My little flute fitted into their orchestra. The practice lessons were unforgettable for me - and not only for orchestra rehearsals! Also for the "Insieme, ragassi! of our Maestro!"*⁴⁸ Gino Guarnieri also remembered Matania from London who oversaw musical performances in camp. Music enriched camp life. These educational and artistic pursuits took place in one of the empty barracks.

There were numerous other activities which broke the monotony of life inside the barbed wire fence. Games such as draughts, cards and chess were enjoyed. Each camp had a loudspeaker which broadcast Australian music and in time Australian radio broadcasts. A Mr CW Walker had a travelling film company which visited camps and showed Australian travelogue features and comic cartoons.

Men also engaged in personal projects. Francesco Matania composed music and painted. Giorgio Scola kept a diary as did Rando Bertoia who also engaged in mechanical tinkering and then upon return to Scotland became a watchmaker. Bartolomeo Calderoni did not engage himself in camp projects because he was busy planning a cookbook. In 1978 Calderoni realised his dream and published *The Complete Book of Cold Dishes*. Mosaic workers Pietro Mariutto and Sisto Ferrarin made a mosaic tabletop made from pieces of wood which was then given to an Australian guard at Tatura Camp. Giovanni Baldelli composed articles, poetry and plays. Some of the poems Baldelli composed during internment in Australia were published in *All'Ombra Del Gufo*. Other men set up a camp magazine *Gioventù* and wrote articles and poems for it. In *Gioventù Numero di Natale* some of the articles published were: *Due Natali* - Pietro Beschizza, *L'Industria dell Paste Alimentari* - Giuseppe Lembo, *La Riviera* - Ettore Bianchi, *Ode to a Fantasy* - Giorgio Scola, *Christmas* - Pietro Lucchesi,

48 Hans-Heinrich Gurland, *Mein Weiter Weg* (BoD-Books on Demand, 2008).

Sale e Aceto del Reparto - Rizzieri Ferrucci and *Sport News* by Pacifico Vittorio Tolaini. Being involved and engaged was beneficial for the mental health and wellbeing of the internees.

A library was established which comprised of donated old novels. Humanitarian groups like the YMCA, the Red Cross, Quakers and local charities were all known to offer support to internees and prisoners of war with donations of books, sport and musical equipment. Vittorio Tolaini mentioned that together with Luigi Beschizza and Nicola Cua, they set up a lending library: B.C.T. being their initials. Books were loaned out for a small fee and as the funds grew, the trio were able to expand the library with purchases of new books.

Lectures were also given by some of the Italians in a wide range of topics while others engaged in personal projects. Colonel Borghi presented a lecture on *Roman Architecture*, Giovanni Baldelli spoke on the topic of *Christianity* and Antonio D'Agostino gave a discourse on *New Social Order*. Men like Giovanni Baldelli and Ugo Ugolini also kept busy writing articles on topics of interest. According to Giovanni Baldelli's daughter Giovanna, he was a prolific writer during his time in Australia and as a committed social anarchist no doubt gave many more lectures on topics of interest.^{xvii} Ugo Ugolini, a freelance journalist, drafted articles which he presented to newspapers in Australia for consideration for publication. One essay was titled: *The Influence of Women in the Life of Nations, Why Mussolini led Italy into War*. Dr Giorgio Boggio's area of expertise was 'political economy and economic policy'; he actively sought opportunities to engage in correspondence with likeminded people in Australia. During internment, he was offered a job as a proofreader of a religious magazine and then a job on the editorial staff of a new Italian language newspaper. Writing academic papers played an important role in keeping the professional men connected to their pre-war lives while lectures engaged younger minds with interesting topics.

Sport

Sport was another area of interest for the Italian internees. Ping pong, bowls, cricket, tennis and golf were played but football had a greater appeal, particularly for the younger men.

Football games were played on a small field inside the camps. There were hut vs hut competitions between the Italians and sevens against the Germans. By April 1941, a larger sports arena outside the compound neared completion at Camp 2 Tatura. The games played outside between the Germans and the Italians were known as the 'Internationals'. On a smaller field, the Germans were superior, but on the outside field, the Italians won more games than they lost. On 22 July 1942, Luigi Beschizza was bestowed the award of Loveday Camp 'champion' football player. The UK Italians had been at Loveday Camp 10 since 13 December 1941. The International Football Championship held from January to July 1942 was a competition between the Germans and the Italians. Beschizza played the position of right midfield, and his certificate was adorned with the fascist flags of Italy and Germany; a reminder that politics and allegiances to fascism were ever present in the internment camps. Beschizza's passion for football extended to his plans to improve the condition of the football field at Loveday Camp 10. With the support of Dr Zezi and the Germans, he was instrumental in grading the field of loose sand with squidges made of wood.

The three Bowling Greens in Tatura Camp 2B were adjacent to the perimeter fence, situated behind the dormitories. Gino Guarnieri, tutored by Filippo Guidobaldi, made wooden bowls for the older men. Blocks of wood cut from disposal beams were shaped into rough spheres to be used as bowls until such times that bowls could be purchased.

As Luigi Beschizza remembered, Dr Zezi was head of sport, having more than a passing interest in sports. He had been the official doctor for the 1936 Berlin Olympics Italian Rowing Team. Athletic activities were also part of camp life with a jumping ground set out inside Tatura Camp 2B and competitions held. One example of athletics competitions was an 800 m race, held in Loveday Camp 10, won by Pietro Beschizza with his certificate awarded by Dr Zezi.

Sports activities and organisation engaged the young and the old. Within three weeks of arriving in Australia, *The Sports Committee decided to hold a special Sports Day for older men soon, to include also the ever popular 'Gioco delle Piastrelle'*. 23 September 1940.⁴⁹ And in December 1940, 51 year old Mario Croci played for Hut 1 Reserve Team captained by 26 year old Giovanni Baldelli in the Christmas inter-hut competition. Participation in sports was a way of keeping the men of all ages active and socially engaged.

⁴⁹ Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 27.

Reports from Official Visitors

Approved Official Visitors to Tatura Camp were The Hon. Mr Justice Gavan Duffy and The Hon. Mr Justice Norman O'Byrne of Melbourne. Hon. Duffy visited Tatura Camp 2B on 26 September 1940 and together with Hon. O'Bryne made a visit on 6 November 1940. A summary of the visits follow.

26 September 1940

John Borghi camp leader raised several matters with Hon. Duffy during his September visit. Hon. Duffy also met with several individual Italian internees. Of note were those who wished to make application for release from internment: Giuseppe Martinez, Ugo Baccanello, Angelo Paolo Coli, Angelo Greco, Antonio Greco, Giuseppe Colla, Pietro Rengozzi, Guido Gonnella, Armando Bertuzzi, Giovanni Crolla, Giuseppe Pelosi and Carlo Notarianni.

Luigi Cappuccini sought permission to write to his two sons who were interned in England.

Giuseppe Pelosi asked if he was allowed to write to and receive letters from relatives in Italy.

Marcello Papa asked permission to place an advertisement in a Sydney newspaper. His son Francesco was working as a waiter in Sydney, but the letter he had in his possession with Francesco's address had been taken from him when he was arrested.

Vittorio Sartor asked to obtain news of his wife, Mrs Rosina Sartor of 8 Goodge Place, London.

Bartolomeo Calderoni sought the protection of the Uruguayan Consul General Sydney and requested permission to write to him.

Angelo Biasoni stated that as an official of the Italian Government, he was entitled to be sent to Italy.

Giorgio Boggio expressed his desire for release but also raised the question of jurisdiction.^{xviii}

Ivaldo Antinori made a request for permission to obtain books.

Giuseppe Belloni requested to obtain information for trade purposes after the war.

6 November 1940

Mr Borghi, as leader of the group, stated that he did not have a copy of the regulations governing the camps made by the Governor in Command. A promise was made to supply him and all camp leaders with the relevant *Rules and Orders* issued for matters relating to internment camps.

The main issue raised was communication with families. Many men had not been in touch with their relatives since their internment in June 1940. Questions were raised: Might letters have been withheld due to content? Since the men were not allowed to send airmail letters or telegrams, might the authorities, undertake on their behalf, to make enquiries in England through local police?

Andrea Pini and Guglielmo Biagi had received news that family in England had paid money to the Brazilian Embassy in London for transmission to Australia. As this had happened in August 1940, the men needed assistance to find out why they had not received the money.

Giuseppe Lembo and Angelo Biasoni made representation on behalf of those men who had had money taken at Bury, Warth Mills Camp. The total amount was circa £4,000 and the men were anxious to receive the money into their Australian accounts.

Angelo Biasoni had handed a telegram to Lieut. Patterson on 12 September 1940. He asked if the telegram had been passed on to the censors for dispatch and/or forwarded to the Japanese Consul.

However, the cases of Luigi Di Ciacci and Pasquale Pacitti are the most poignant and heartbreaking requests. The Hon. Duffy and The Hon. O'Bryan reported:

Luigi Di Ciacci No. 25063. This internee applies for special permission to cable to London to his wife. The grounds of his application were that he had a son and a brother on the "Arandora Star" and last saw them the night before that ship was sunk. He does not know whether they are alive or not and has not heard from his wife since. I have taken the liberty of writing a special letter in regard to this man's case to Capt. Maltby.

Pasquale Pacitti No. 25197. This internee says that he had 2 brothers drowned on the "Arandora Star" and that the wife of one of them would appear, from letters received, not to know of her husband's death. Her address is –

*Mrs J Pacitti
146 George Street
Glasgow*

We told him that a letter which he sent from Broadmeadows on 3 September would probably now have reached her and that in any case the authorities would probably not undertake giving information to a woman of the death of her husband unless they were fully informed of that fact.⁵⁰

Due to the exceptional circumstances of Luigi Di Ciacci's request, permission to cable his wife was approved.

50 Reports of Official visitors to Camps 1,2 & 3 Tatura and comment thereon, 1940-1941, NAA:MP508/1 255/715/143, National Archives of Australia, Melbourne.

The Basics

Each internee was given a number. Captain Heighway had assigned these numbers in preparation for the arrival of the *Dunera* while he was waiting for them in Fremantle. The *Dunera* Italians' numbers were E2500 – E25199 and the Germans' numbers were E35000 onwards. The E designated England so there was no confusion with Australian internees.

Clothing

Upon arrival in Tatura, the Italian internees had few clothes and possessions. Alessandro Edoni listed his possessions as a small parcel of clothes while Francesco Apicella, Angelo Paolo Coli and Vittorio Bechelli listed personal effects as NIL. Giorgio Scola had listed his clothing on 13 August 1940 while on the *Dunera*. He wrote, *Looking over my belongings an inventory would show: one Army jacket and trousers, shirt and boots; two pairs of socks; one pair woollen pants; one pair black knickers; one handkerchief; one pair flannel trousers; and one scrap of soap.*⁵¹ The black loose fitting sports knickers was a random item from a pile of confiscated clothing that had been distributed in the Italians' mess.

Under the regulations, internees with less than £5 were issued clothing free of charge. The information below is compiled from reports written by Dr Georges Morel, representative for the International Committee for the Red Cross.^{xix}

The clothing issue consisted of:

1 hat	2 cotton undershirts
1 white hat for work	2 pairs woollen socks
1 coat (dyed burgundy)	2 hand towels
1 jacket (dyed burgundy)	2 handkerchiefs
1 pants (dyed burgundy)	1 pair of shoelaces
1 pair of shoes	1 pair of suspenders
2 cotton underwear	Brush
2 woollen underwear	Comb
1 pullover	Safety razor
2 flannel shirts	1 razor blade (per week)
2 cotton & woollen undershirts	

In time, once the men had their own finances, they had access to clothing items sold in the camp canteen and through Mail Order.

⁵¹ Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 17.

Daily Timetable

Daily life took on a routine for the Italian internees and the day was generally organised as follows:

reveille 6.30 am: roll call 7 am: breakfast 8 am: inspection 9.30am which included sick parade: lunch 12.30 pm: roll call 5pm: dinner 6pm: roll call 8.30 – 10pm: lights out 10 pm

The daily timetable changed slightly with the change in seasons.

Rations were the same as for Australian troops and were ample. In time, rations varied to take account of the needs of the different nationalities and seasonal supply.

Ration scale per week per 100 men (October 1943 Tatura Camp 2A)

Bread 525 lbs	Dried Peas 43 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs	Turnips 75 lbs
Yeast 25 ozs	Pepper 7 ozs	Potatoes 437 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Coffee 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs	Rice 21 $\frac{7}{8}$ lbs	Onions 87 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Curry 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs	Salt 32 $\frac{7}{8}$ lbs	Beets 25 lbs
Flour 70 lbs	Sugar 100 lbs	Cabbage 100 lbs
Dried Fruit 43 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs	Tea 100 ozs	Carrots 40 lbs
Molasses 8 lbs	Lard 65 $\frac{5}{8}$ lbs	Cauliflower 100 lbs
Jam 79 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs	Butter 50 lbs	Celery 40 lbs
Fresh Milk 350 pints	Cheese 37 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs	Parsnips 10 lbs
Mustard 7 ozs	Eggs 400 pieces	Pumpkin 60 lbs
Macaroni 85 lbs	Beef 300 lbs	Oranges 100 pieces
Cereals 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs	Mutton 300 lbs	Apples 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs
White turnips or radishes 75 lbs		Pureed Tomatoes 24 boxes of 30 oz bottles

Finances

The 571 *Dunera* internees who disembarked at Melbourne had arrived in Australia with a collective financial balance of £739, found by guards on the second day of internment at Tatura. Luigi Beschizza recalled that Carlo Notarianni had only one hand and inside his false hand he had hidden money which remained undetected on the *Dunera* and that Pietro Barbuti found £5 in a jacket given out while on the *Dunera*. Due to the numerous raids on possessions on the *Dunera*, the men had few possessions and finances.

Money was needed for basics such as toiletry items and cigarettes. As cablegrams to families in the UK were not permitted and mail service slow between Australia and the UK, there was no immediate way for the Italians to arrange and receive remittances of funds from home. Colonel Borghi raised this issue with a Melbourne judge. He wrote, 5 March 1941 *There is also the question of the impossibility at present and in future of the men receiving further remittances from their homes.*⁵² Internees were

52 Borghi Giovanni, 1940-1943, NAA:A367 C75811, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

reliant upon the generosity of philanthropic groups such as the Australian Red Cross, Quakers, Catholic and Jewish organisations. One generous Italian held in Tatura Camp 1, upon hearing of the plight of the survivors of the *Arandora Star* donated cigarettes for the group on more than one occasion.

Michele Coia's letter to his sister offers further insight into camp life, finances and clothing. He wrote on 30 April 1943, *The camp clothes are not bad, but you can't pick and choose, they are all small stuff and you have to renovate them, they don't last long, even the boots are nothing special, the only thing is the underwear, they are new and I have to pay for them when I want them, as I have over £5 in the bank.*⁵³

Some men who required spectacles were issued with a new set after they arrived in Australia. Colonel Borghi advocated strongly that these men should not be required to pay for these prescription spectacles at a cost of £1/2/6. His point being that they had left England with their own spectacles, but while on the *HMT Dunera*, were deprived of them. Emilio Rossi felt that taking from him his shoe supports for flat feet, was an unwarranted injustice. Such were the actions of the guards on the *Dunera*.

Once the men had access to money, the range of items available from the canteen was expanded and profits from canteen sales increased. The canteen profits were used to pay wages to essential staff, to buy items for the collective use such as for sport and art equipment and as dividends to each Italian internee. It wasn't until voluntary work parties were organised by the Camp Commandant that the men could earn an income and were paid 1 shilling for a six-hour day.

Italians with businesses were concerned for the ongoing financial security of their businesses as well as provision for their families. Dr Gaetano Zezi wrote to his wife on 11 October 1940, *If the war lasts not longer than June 1st 1941 there is enough in the bank to cover everything including income tax to end of 1940.*⁵⁴ Zezi would not return until 14 February 1944 when he disembarked the *SS Themistocles* at Cardiff.

Some men received financial assistance from various sources and connections. Angelo Biasoni received a payment from the Italian government of £4/12/2 per month while Dino Accini received a compensation for possessions lost on the *Dunera* of £50. Pietro Pillon secured £50 from his previous employer and Carlo and Giuseppe Martinez received funds from General Electric. Dr Gaetano Zezi used his connections within Elizabeth Arden to secure an advance of £15 as well as the remittance of clothing and toiletry items. Pietro Gallo was financially independent with the payment from a trust of £2000 per annum. Money was held in trust for internees and meticulously accounted for.

In those first six months in Australia most of the *Dunera* Italians had to undertake paid work to be financial.

⁵³ Coia Michele, 1943, NAA:A367, C76031, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

⁵⁴ NAA: A367 C75321.

La Nostra Chiesetta di Tatura

The chapel was Filippo Guidobaldi's domain and in December 1940, his workshop was in Hut 8 Tatura Camp 2B. He was known in the film industry as Philippe Guidobaldi from Nice^{xx}: technical expert, specialising in miniature models and specialist effects. He was also a specialist in crafting carnival floats in Nice. He had joined British International Pictures in 1928 and worked at Gaumont British Studios in Shepherd's Bush London. He was also reputed to have put the lady who grew spiders for their cobwebs out of business, when he invented and patented a mechanical cobweb making device. He worked on *High Treason* 1929; Alfred Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps* (1935), *Romeo and Juliet* (1954) and *Christopher Columbus* (1949). One of his first movies after internment was *Love Story* (1944). He was recognised as the 'prince of deceivers' and a 'modern magician'.

Guidobaldi worked on creating a chapel inside one of the unused barracks complete with altar and decorative panels. Giovanni Berni was the Chapel Warden who attended all religious celebrations and worked with Guidobaldi in the chapel. Gino Guarnieri fondly remembered Guidobaldi who fashioned a beautiful chapel inside a barracks which had an altar and candelabras. Dr Terri Colpi noted Francesco Matania's contribution to the chapel: *the well known painter Francesco Matania designed the altar-piece*.⁵⁵ The painting illustrated behind the altar is the painting of 'Christ Walking on the Sea of Galilee'^{xxi} which was remembered by Nicola Cua.

The chapel was a special place for the Italians.



Figure 1: Tatura Camp Chapel⁵⁶

55 Dr Terri Colpi, *The Italian Factor*, 124.

56 Giorgio Scola, *Tatura Camp Chapel*, 1941, sketch.

The First Christmas

Filippo Guidobaldi prepared for Christmas with the construction of a beautiful crib displaying the scene of the nativity. He had made the figures with clay and the backdrop was a night scene with a sky full of stars.

In the lead up to Christmas, Giovanni Baldelli was busy compiling the 14th edition of *Gioventù*; the camp magazine. *Gioventù Numero di Natale* N0. 14 25 December 1940 XIX was a compilation of contributions by members of the Tatura Camp 2B. Gabriele Coccozza, a shopkeeper from Glasgow shared his thoughts. He wrote,

A Bad Christmas

This Christmas will be the ugliest and most painful Christmas I have ever had. It will be the first holy Christmas that I will have to be away from all my loved ones and away from all my possessions. On that holiday I will be very sorrowful thinking about the great distance that separates me from my dear parents, my wife and my two dear children.^{xxii} In the days leading up to the holiday it is my custom and also my duty to send my dear parents in Italy beautiful cards of good wishes and an affectionate little letter. The only day of the year that I closed the store in Scotland was Holy Christmas. That day was always the day when everyone in the family would go to midday holy mass. Afterwards we would go back to the house and have lunch with such joy and joy to see us all united at the table; we enjoyed a new thing to not have the thought of the store. After the customary lunch we would go to the city of Glasgow and enjoy ourselves until eleven o'clock in the evening. The best part of the day was for me when we went to a store where I had the great pleasure of seeing my little girl looking at so many things she had never seen and having fun playing with so many of those toys suitable for babies. So many times already I think where and how they will spend this Christmas, my wife and my little girl.(translated from Italian) ⁵⁷ ^{xxiii}

Tolaini described in his memoirs this poignant first Christmas. He reflected, *Permission was granted for a midnight Mass and also to allow the compound gates to stay open so that the Germans could have access to our compound and hear Mass. A huge log fire was lit in the middle of the compound and as midnight drew near, we stood around the fire in a circle and sang Christmas carols. Many of the soldiers entered the camp, joined in the singing and stayed for Mass.⁵⁸ In six and a half months, the men had been interned as 'enemy aliens', survived the sinking of the SS *Arandora Star*, endured the harrowing journey on the HMT *Dunera*, organised their life behind barbed wire and built a community. Their second Christmas was spent at Loveday Camp 10 in tented accommodation.*

⁵⁷ Gabriele Coccozza, "Un Brutto Natale," *Gioventù* No. 14 (December 1940): 19.

⁵⁸ Tolaini, interview.

The poignancy of *Natale* written for *Gioventù* conveys the emotions and thoughts for the group.

Natale^{xxiv}

The return of Christmas evokes a world that belongs to each of us in particular. As we have heard it narrated by our mothers, as from the voices of our priests and the numbers of nativity scenes we have seen, we reconstruct the idyllic scene that took place in Bethlehem on the night of 24-25 December 1940. The Virgin Mary, St Joseph, the Child, the angels, the shepherds, with the snow, the star-studded sky and the brightest comet are vivid and clear in a corner of our minds, and contemplating them suffuses our souls with a sweetness, a sense of universal goodness, a yearning for harmony and a wish of peace that has no equal. One forgets all the battles, the bitterness and defeats of life, the regrets, the pains, the grudges, the anxieties; and even if one cannot completely forget them, they remain there like a morning mist that only awaits the sure advent of the sun to completely disappear.

Christmas is the symbol of human goodness, of the miracle that this goodness can work, the end of a divided world, when the strong oppress the weak, the cunning deceive the simple and the innocent pay with their blood for the ambitions of the unjust. Christmas is an invitation that God repeats every year to the heart of humanity to make itself better. And perhaps as never before this year we feel this invitation coming to us in a heartfelt, forgiving rebuke of him whom we have so much forgotten who said to men "Love one another" and consecrated with his blood the earnestness of his call.

Races, nations, parties, social ideologies, interests disguised as missions, a heap of strong, violent and ruthless things claim possession of men, make them slaves of deadly weapons, and weapons that sow death and destruction in lands, skies and seas. The hearts of men are silent, because the heart at war is not allowed to speak, but is mute, it yearns from its depths for something of its own, for something it knows, something it has loved for so long, with a love that is not mixed with hatred. Our hearts yearn as never before on this day for our families. When we were torn from them, we left a void and a void we have carried with us in our hearts ever since. Sadness invades us as we think of the many miles that separate us from our loved ones, and we pity the blind pride, foolish in its wickedness that the evil perpetrated against us and our loved ones is of no benefit to those who perpetrated it.

Evil is sterile, only goodness is fruitful. So says the helpless child born in a stable, and his message he gives to those who are oppressed and deceived, to those who suffer, to those who are not armed for the conquest of the world. He speaks to us here, to us in the great conflict that now renders the world helpless for the moment.

Goodness alone is fruitful. What can it serve us to hate, to cultivate the desire for revenge, if not to immiserate ourselves? And there is this: if we have a hatred, a desire for evil in us, it must come out of us. If we have been rude, insulting and worse towards our comrades in here, it is because of the hatred we harbour towards others outside. We have already suffered enough, let us not suffer now. Let us, on this day and from this day, establish a closer bond between us, let us give each other a little of that affection that we nurture for our distant loved ones, and who knows, let a little of that sweetness that we enjoyed with them reign among us.(translated from Italian)⁵⁹

59 "Natale," *Gioventù*, No. 14 (December 1940): 1.

The First Easter 1941

The Italians had their beautifully, decorated chapel courtesy of Guidobaldi and religion held a special place for the Italians. Spiritual welfare for internees and prisoners of war was a priority for Dr Giovanni Panico, the Apostolic Delegate in Australia who visited the internment camps and spoke with the men. Panico provided rosary beads and the prayer book *L'Amico del Prigioniero* written in Italian and Latin. Messages home to family could also be sent through Panico.

A special card which was professionally printed and distributed to the *Dunera* Italians in celebration of Easter 1941, could well have been arranged by Panico. Antonio Alonzi and Luigi Fulgoni both from Wales, took home with them this Easter Prayer Card, a small and simple reminder of life in Tatura Camp.

A photo of the crucifixion of Jesus is on the obverse side with the following words on the reverse side:

*Ecce lignum Crucis, in quo salus mundi pependit.
Ricordo delle Sacre Cermimonie dell Settimana Santa e della Festa di Pasqua 1941 nella
nostra chiesetta di Tatura Australia.
Haec dies quam fecit Dominus exsulemus et laetemur in ea.⁶⁰*

Translated from Latin the words read:

*Behold the wood of the Cross, in which the salvation of the world hangs.
Memory of the Sacred Ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter 1941 in our little church in
Tatura Australia.
Let us rejoice and be glad in this day which the Lord has made.*

Luigi Fulgoni's devotion to religion was personal but he made an important contribution to religion in Tatura Camp 2. As Maria Serena Balestracci explained, *Luigi Fulgoni distinguished himself among the prisoners for his religious devotion. Every day, as he had done on the Arandora Star, he recited his rosary, and many of the prisoners joined him in this daily ritual... In 1943, a group of Italian internees gave him a painting, as a sign of gratitude, portraying what the prisoners called their 'little church'... written in the painting's dedication, Luigi Fulgoni was called the 'curate' because of his unswerving faith.*⁶¹

The importance of religion is reinforced by Giorgio Scola's comments in his diary. Giorgio Scola^{xxv} wrote that during the voyage on the *Dunera*, *Every night by 9.30 everyone is cleared off our enclosure on deck and this is the signal for the Rosary to be said in our own Mess. This is solemnly observed by most of the Italians.*⁶² The recitation of the Rosary continued in camp as noted by Giorgio Scola and was an almost nightly feature as were talks on philosophy.

60 Luigi Fulgoni, Easter 1941, Personal Collection of Luigi Fulgoni.

61 Maria Serena Balestracci, *Arandora Star Dall'oblio all memoria* (Monte Università Parma, 2008).

62 Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 16.

Theatre Productions

Under the directorship of Giovanni Baldelli, a dramatic society was formed and plays were staged in Tatura. A rather worn page from Baldelli's notes has survived. Deciphered, the following men's names are listed for parts in one of Baldelli's plays: Alessandro Edoni, Giorgio Boggio, Pacitti, Rossi, Chioconi, Attilio Marioni, Baldelli, Gino Guarnieri, Corinto Pardini, Amilcare Cima, Guido Gonnella, Pietro Beschizza, Luigi Jaconelli and Jannetta. The stage was set up at one end of a mess hut. Gino Guarnieri reminisced that there were a lot of men like himself who were involved in the theatre which put on regular productions.

The staging of a play required sets to be built, hours of rehearsals and costumes to be made. Decio Rossi was head designer for Lady Duff Gordon^{xxvi} under the label *House of Lucille* in Paris. Might he have been involved in the costumes?

In 1986, documentary producer Alfio Bernabei interviewed Giovanni Baldelli for *Dangerous Characters, The Arandora Star Tragedy*. Baldelli's memories of the plays were clear. *It was here [Australia] that Baldelli began to write plays which were staged in the dining room. The performances took place about once a month. He used to rehearse the internees, design the scenes and costumes were made of paper. He was also acting, nearly always in the parts of women 'because most of the others were reluctant to play female roles', he joked.*

The title of one of his plays was 'June 10' and dramatized the arrests of Italians in Britain. Another was called 'Canzone dei 200' and it was for this one that he wrote the words for the tune. "I don't remember if the song was at the beginning or at the end of the play" Baldelli told me, "but I remember that in the audience there was a 'fascistone' who on hearing the tune exclaimed 'but this is Caserio's aria!'. Sante Caserio was an anarchist. The song was performed by an internee who had a very good voice, Baldelli remembered and the 'special effects' were done quite professionally because among the internees there was 'a certain Montagna who used to work for Gaumont'.⁶³ Filippo Guidobaldi was the set designer Baldelli remembered for he had extensive experience in set design in the film industry.

Alessandro Edoni took home with him a copy of the song *Canzone dei 200*. It emotionally captures the experiences from the *Arandora Star* and the *Dunera*. Most likely Baldelli staged the plays *June 10* and *Canzone dei 200* in Tatura for the first anniversary of the events in June and July 1941, before the group was sent to Loveday Camps.

Bernabei reflected on his first meeting with poet and author, Giovanni Baldelli. Baldelli told him he had composed a song about the *Arandora Star* and then, *"Baldelli began to recite the words "Mentre il sole di luglio non risplendeva ancora, sull'onda molle e*

63 Alfio Bernabei, "A Song about the Arandora Star", in *Italian Scottish Identities and Connections* 15, eds. Margaret Rose & Emanuela Rossini, (Italian Cultural Institute, 2000), 62.

*muta filava l'Arandora". He was speaking the lines with great clarity, with a musical cadenza and the crescendo of a dramatic poem. He had not yet told me that he had written poetry himself and published several books, but the power of his recitation and the choice of images left me in no doubt that I was in the presence of an artist and an intellectual.*⁶⁴

At Bernabei's last meeting with Baldelli, Baldelli "started to sing. It was a very moving performance and he clearly had the victims and their families in mind,"⁶⁵ remembered Alfio Bernabei.

Preserved for posterity, Baldelli's performance was captured on film and Bernabei reflected that, *nobody watching would easily forget his haunting stare that still looked at the tragedy unfolding with hundreds around him about to lose their lives.*⁶⁶ Over 85 years later, Baldelli's *Canzone dei 200* is a poignant and evocative requiem.

La canzone dei Duecento

*[The Arandora Star Song]*⁶⁷

*Mentre il sole di luglio non risplendeva ancora
Sull'onda molle e muta filava l'Arandora
Che trasportava dei poveri italiani
Strappati dai lor cari verso un paese lontan*

*Nel sonno e nella veglia ciascun accarezzava
Con mal celato pianto la sua recente piaga
Quando tremendo uno scoppio s'udì
Così suonò la diana di quel tragico dì*

*Sui ponti e dalle stive il subito stupore
Accorser tutti quanti con una stretta al cuore
Ed alle barche ognuno s'affrettò
E disse il comandante "si salvi ormai chi può"*

*Sull'onde buie e ostili, vedisi galleggiare
Ogni sorta di legni e vasto un naufragare
Quindi la nave da le caldaie urlò
Rizzatasi un istante nel mare sprofondò*

*Con lei scesero a fondo a cento i fratei nostri
Chi invocando iddio e chi imprecando ai mostri
E noi per l'acqua sempre nel dubbio ancor
La vista dei cadaveri riempivaci di orror.*

These are the verses covering the story of the *Arandora Star*. A translation for this *Arandora Star* section is provided in Appendix 5. The ballad continued telling the second part of the story for the 200 survivors.

64 Alfio Bernabei, *Italian Scottish Identities and Connections* 15, 61.

65 Alfio Bernabei, *Italian Scottish Identities and Connections* 15, 63.

66 Alfio Bernabei, *Italian Scottish Identities and Connections* 15, 63.

67 Alfio Bernabei, *Italian Scottish Identities and Connections* 15, 66.

Painting and Art

Another recreational pursuit was art. Painting classes were held and Father Owens, the Catholic priest who took mass every two weeks, donated painting supplies and canvas. When Nicola Cua visited Tatura in 1991, he was hoping to find a painting entitled *Christ Walking on the Sea of Galilee* in which the artist had used Cua as a model for the body of Christ, and one of the German internees had modelled for the head. The painting was presented to Father Owens, but its whereabouts remains unknown.

The mentors for the painting and art classes in the camps were Francesco Matania and possibly Filippo Guidobaldi who were experienced in this field. Cua remembered the famous Francesco Matania, who gave lessons in painting.

Alessandro Edoni produced a pencil sketch and watercolour of Tatura Chapel. The three features of the story of Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee are waves, a boat and Jesus. In Edoni's work, the painting on the back wall of the chapel was no doubt the painting of *Christ Walking on the Sea of Galilee* which Cua remembered.

Guidobaldi painted scenes of Tatura Camp which he took home to England. These scenes illustrate the camp gardens, buildings, tents and Australian flora.

Another aspect of art was the painting of portraits by other artists. Alberto Maciocia told his family his portrait was painted by a German friend. Alessandro Edoni also had his portrait painted which he took home to Glasgow.

Marco Gazzi was sketched by Kurt Winkler and Felix Braun, German artists who were in Tatura Camp 2 1940-1943. This highlights not only the Italians' appreciation of art but also the interrelationships between German and Italian internees at Camp 2 Tatura. While Camp 2A and Camp 2B were separated by barbed wire and gates, movement between the two camps was allowed at certain times.

Michael Manfredi sketched Rando Bertoia. The sketch is held in the Tatura Museum, and is important to the history of the *Dunera* Italians as it highlights the changing landscape of internment groups within the Tatura Camps. The 150 remaining UK Italians at Tatura Camp in February 1943 shared Camp 2A with 27 Germans of mixed origin, two Austrians, one Bulgarian, one Russian, one local Italian and four Italians from Malay. Dr Michael Manfredi one of the Italian internees arrested in Malay sketched Rando Bertoia. Manfredi held a Doctorate in Agriculture and was working in rubber plantations, when he was arrested in Kedah, Malay on 11 June 1940. Taken to Singapore he arrived in Australia on the *Queen Mary* which arrived on 27 September 1940. His internment in Australia began in Loveday Camp. Of Bertoia, Captain Borghi, the leader of the *Dunera* Italians reported that he was '*one of the best boys in the camp*'. Bertoia was one of the youngest internees; he was 19 years old when the *Arandora Star* sank.

Landscapes were popular amongst the artists, with a diverse collection of Tatura landscapes painted by the German internees and the European Jewish internees. Luigi Poggioli's 1944 landscape of Tatura Camp was gifted to Noemi Vendramini, future wife of Vittorio Tolaini, in January 1945 on her 21st birthday. Now held in the Tatura Museum, it provides a visual of the barracks, the gum trees and the vastness of the Tatura landscape in the camps during WW2. Of note is the lack of barbed wire fences and guard towers.

Giorgio Scola, a university student of architecture, was an articulate and intelligent young man who was also a talented artist. He not only contributed an article to *Gioventù Edition 14* but for the front cover of the magazine, he reproduced Guidobaldi's nativity crib. During his time in Australia, he produced beautifully painted watercolour scenes of Tatura and Loveday Camps as well as scenes of the Australian bush. Scola also sketched aspects of camp life: the Tatura Chapel, the dormitory, the laundry and the barbed wire fences and gates to the entrances of Tatura Camp 2B.

Sketching and painting broadened the range of pastimes available for the Italians. Matania, a man of culture, was able to share his passion for art and music with the men. Few would have had time in their pre-internment life for lessons in painting. Art is a personal perspective on one's world and for those Italians who attended art classes or sat for portraits, their world was captured and preserved for posterity.

Artist Frida Kahlo is quoted as saying, *I don't paint dreams or nightmares, I paint my own reality... I think that little by little I'll be able to solve my problems and survive.*⁶⁸ Her words seem pertinent to all internees who took up a paintbrush or pencil in the internment camps.

68 Frida Kahlo, "Frida Kahlo Quotes", *Frida Kahlo and her Paintings*, <https://www.fridakahlo.org/>.

Spirited

Another preoccupation of the UK Italians was alcohol production. Though a prohibited pastime, the men found ingenious ways of making, concealing their production facilities and hiding the alcohol. Vittorio Tolaini explained it as a 'cat and mouse' game, with the Italians finding ways to produce and hide the alcohol and the guards undertaking searches to locate the alcohol. One still would be found and destroyed, and another one would be built and put into production.

Gino Guarnieri recalled that one still was made in an underground canteen under a hut and that one of his friends kept bottles hidden under the altar claiming that '*Jesus protects the wine*'. According to Guarnieri, eventually the Intelligence Services were brought in to put an end to alcohol production. An investigation into items bought and sold at the canteen revealed unusually high levels of sultana sales. An officer made inquiries about the number of cases of sultanas that were being purchased, to be told that as Italians they ate a lot of panettone and as the men had lived in England for so long, they also loved sultana pudding. Future access to dried fruit was curtailed.

Filippo Guidobaldi devised another unique method of concealment. His grandson David explained, *Like all of the prisoners they made their own alcohol, and the hard part was where to store it, as well as the illegal still... I remember as a child, he said to me, 'Where do you hide a tree?' Answer, 'In a forest'. And that's just what he did. There were two tree stumps outside his hut and Guido decided to create a floral display in the tops of both. However, the fake tray of plants hid a hollowed out cavity, and that is where he hid the contraband.*⁶⁹ A special effects magician for film, Guidobaldi deftly adapted his skills for his new environment.

In Loveday Camp in 1942, Guidobaldi continued to make wine which he stored in his work tent where he was making items for the church. Gino Guarnieri and Vittorio Tolaini remembered how Captain 'Patchy' of the Australian Guard received intelligence about the wine. The captain ordered Guidobaldi out of the tent and posted a guard at the entrance and ordered another guard to fetch a wheelbarrow to cart the wine away. Always in for a lark Nicola Cua, Luigi Beschizza and Vittorio Tolaini took matters into their own hands. Tolaini wrote, '*...we decided to salvage the drink. Luigi slashed the rear of the tent and passed the bottles out to me. In turn, I passed them to Nicky and others who were standing by, to run and hide them elsewhere... when the guard returned with the wheelbarrow, Captain Patchy, with a dramatic gesture, shouted to the guard - "Take those f...ing bottles out of the tent and wheel them outside." The soldier opened the flaps of the tent and finding it empty, said - "What bottles, Sir? The tent is empty." A roar of rage surged from the captain as he saw the laughing prisoners standing*

⁶⁹ Peter Cook, "A Blast from the Past: Filippo Guidobaldi", Matte Shot - A Tribute to Golden Era Special FX, June 4 2020, <https://nzpetesmattehot.blogspot.com/2020/06/matte-painting-review-selection-of.html>.

by...He marched away stiffly, swearing revenge.⁷⁰ This incident was to be alluded to on the 1942 Easter Menu card.

A 12 May 1944 Menu from Tatura Camp 2A⁷¹ listed the following items:

Aperitivo del Farmacista

Vini

Podere Roveta Secco

Cantine Sociale Fubinese Capra

Gran marca Calderoni, Vergano e Cua

Fior d'acquavita in coppa a Piemonte

Did this drink menu highlight the Italians 'spirited' humour?

Or are the men mentioned responsible for the production of alcohol?

The menu acknowledged Libero Roveta from Alessandria, Italy, Francesco Capra from Fubine (Alessandria), Italy, Bartolomeo Calderoni, Sisto Luigi Vergano and Giovanni Cua a trio of chefs and head chef at Tatura Camp Ugolino Giovine from Piemonte region of Italy. Capra was the President of the Unione Fubinese in London for many years. By 20 June 1944, all men excepting Giovanni Cua were released from internment.

From the reports of Intelligence Office Tatura Camp, it was noted that on 12 June 1944, three large bottles of still fermenting wine were found in Hut 15 at Tatura Camp 2A. Four days later, a search of Hut 16 produced 12 large bottles of light wine. All wine was seized and destroyed but the perpetrators eluded the authorities. The raids did not faze the Italians. In July 1944, another search exposed a quantity of bottled wine believed to have been manufactured within the compound. Bottles of wine were also reported as found in the garden beds amongst the tomato plants.

70 Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 31.

71 A dinner menu compiled by Italian internees, 1942, P-06536, CO.AS.IT. Italian Historical Society, Melbourne.

Uncertainties

All but forgotten

Colonel Borghi as camp leader, became advocate for the plight of the Italian internees stranded in Australia. Representing the *Dunera* Italians, Borghi corresponded with many private and business Pirelli Company contacts and several official avenues open to him. Recipients of his letters were K Otabe Japanese Consulate General, Sydney, The Hon. Mr Justice Norman O'Bryan Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Melbourne, Dr Georges Morel of the International Committee for the Red Cross Australia, Mittagong, Dr Giuseppe Biondelli Sous Comite Internationale Croix Rouge Turkey and JA Pietzcker Consul for Switzerland, Melbourne.

He advocated for financial assistance, not only for himself as both Pirelli Italy and Pirelli England owed him salaries, but also for Carlo Martinez and his father Giuseppe, fellow employees of Pirelli. Few Italians had been able to keep money safe from searches on the *Dunera*. To purchase items from the canteen such as cigarettes, writing items, and toothpaste, the internees needed an account balance in credit.

When the Italians arrived in Australia, they were represented by the Japanese Legation but assistance was not forthcoming. Borghi wrote on 29 December 1940 to Dr Alberto Pirelli in Milan, Italy and noted, *The Italian government is represented here by the Japanese Legation. We arrived here on 3 September and with the exception of a flying visit on my request on 9 or 10 September, we have been unable to get in touch with anyone of the Japanese legation notwithstanding the many letters sent to them. We have the feeling that we are completely abandoned by them and were it not for the kindness and consideration of the Australian authorities and organisations, our plight might be very sad indeed.*⁷²

It appears that at some time before March 1941, the Italian internees were asked for payment for their clothing issue. Without support from the Japanese Legation, Colonel Borghi wrote to Justice Norman O'Bryan, Judges Chambers, Law Courts Melbourne on 5 March 1941 asking for clarification regarding the clothing issue to internees. He explained, *All their clothing and belongings have been taken away from them without plausible reason [on the Dunera] and they feel that it is perhaps unfair to make them pay for articles which are absolutely indispensable to them...*⁷³

Eventually Borghi received a letter from K. Otabe, Japanese Consulate General Sydney written on 24 April 1941. Otabe responded and stated, *I wrote to the Japanese Foreign Office requesting it to convey the Italian Embassy in Tokio the miseries of overseas internees at Tatura, particularly the shortages of everyday necessities. The Italian Embassy informed the Italian government [which] is prepared to assist the internees to the best of its ability and wishes to know the approximate amount of money which you think necessary to*

72 NAA:A367 C75811.

73 NAA:A367 C75811.

give the requisite relief. The Italian Embassy in Tokio wishes to know the names of those internees killed when the *Arandora Star* was torpedoed.⁷⁴ While Borghi would have felt a sense of relief knowing that finally financial assistance would be forthcoming, he would have felt utterly bewildered at the comments about the *Arandora Star*: The Italian embassy did not want to know the names of the Italians in Australia who had survived the *Arandora Star* tragedy but had expected that Borghi would be able to provide a list of the *Arandora Star* victims.^{xvii} Borghi corresponded again with the Japanese Consulate General, Sydney on 15 May 1941 asking for words of assurance for the group to boost their morale and to give them strength to endure the sad circumstances they had found themselves in. He explained, *There are Italians here interned in this camp who emigrated to Great Britain thirty, forty and even fifty years ago. Some of them have lived all their life in England enjoying either positions in catering or building trade, others enjoying outstanding positions in the medical, industrial and commercial world, many of them have lost their business or positions, but all of them whatever their social standing and not withstanding all the suffering we have gone through have maintained intact their attachments to their mother country.*⁷⁵ Further correspondence suggests that the financial assistance promised by the Japanese Consulate was never forthcoming.

Borghi however was able to obtain relief for the group and individuals. Mr Biondelli in San Paolo Brazil was able to secure articles of comfort from the Committee for the Red Cross. Borghi also liaised with insurance brokers, Bennie S. Cohen & Son Pty Ltd of Melbourne on behalf of Armando Bertuzzi and Fortunato Cavina regarding their insurance policies and outstanding premiums.

Ermenegildo Guido, assistant manager at Claridge's Restaurant, used his contacts within the industry to seek assistance from Australians who had been guests at Claridge's or British clients who had connections in Australia. On 30 September 1940, T.E. Morgan of British Electric Company, resident in Melbourne contacted Guido to explain that he was acting on behalf of the Hon. Mrs Gamage of London and would forward him a 'parcel of comforts'.

The German internees in Tatura Camp 2A were in a better financial position. The 90 German marines received £5 from the German government and the German fascists received a subsidy 'Reichstreue' £3 every four months.

The plight of the *Dunera* refugees was reported in the British press but the situation of the Italian group appears to have gone unnoticed. Giorgio Scola's mother penned a letter in February 1941 to the writer of a letter printed in the *News Chronicle* in England about the *Dunera* refugees. The *Dunera* refugees, before their transportation to Australia was a cohort already known to refugee and philanthropic groups in England. Mrs Scola's words reinforce the view that the Italians were the forgotten group:

74 NAA:A367 C75811.

75 NAA:A367 C75811.

296 Henley Road Reading. 13th Feb. 1941. Dear Madam, Excuse the liberty in writing to you but I have read your letter to the New Chronicle. I am the mother of an Internee son in Australia. He's been saved from the Arandora Star disaster and sent almost immediately to Australia. He must have had a really hard life and now I see from your letter that Internees are so unhappy. I got my son's first letter on the 16th Dec. can you imagine my anxiety, since then I had a letter on the 2 Jan and nothing more. How it is that the Internee you mention has sent you a letter dated 1 Jan and you have it rather soon, as they take 2 or 2 ½ months to come. My son's letter was dated 4 Nov. It is not possible that after this date he has not written again, like your friend. My son was studying Architecture and in November he would have taken his diploma. In his letter he told me that he made a friend there and his descriptions are like the one you mention in your letter. The reason I write is because I shall be very grateful if you would let me know something more regarding the Australia Internee and if you know the reason why I do not hear from my son: have same be moved from the camp. If he is in Hospital do you think they will let me know? Thanking you very much. Yrs. faithfully (Mrs) M. Scola. Please excuse me but I am sure you understand my anxiety. In Sept I sent him a wire with prepaid reply they have not allowed but do you think is now to reply it allow, if so I will send another.⁷⁶

While a delay in mail was expected and common place, why would the mail of the refugee internees be handled differently to that of the Italians? Why was Giorgio Scola not permitted to send a cablegram reply to his mother, particularly as the reply was prepaid? Why was there no central authority in the UK acting as liaison between families in the United Kingdom and authorities in Australia?

Policy was that internees in Australia were not permitted to send cables or wireless communications within Australia or overseas unless the circumstances were exceptional, but they were permitted to receive cables. In May 1941, Borghi made an inquiry with Mr Justice O'Bryan, Melbourne asking for clarification regarding the sending of cables or wires considering that internees in Canada were able to do so freely.

76 Matilde Scola, 13 February 1941, Papers of Eli Rosenbluth, MLMSS 11735, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

Returning Home

The release of the Home Office's *White Paper* in August 1940 presented further uncertainties for the Italian internees. The *White Paper* with subsequent revisions was a guide outlining: *Procedure to be followed in Applying for release*. As Italian internees received news that friends and relatives interned on the Isle of Man were being released, despair hung over the group. The initial 19 categories were extended to 22 categories, but too few applied to the *Dunera* Italians.

On 25 March 1941, Major JD Layton, Liaison Officer acting for the British Home Secretary, arrived in Sydney. He had been sent to deal with the '*Dunera* situation' and to work toward remedying the mistakes made in the internment of refugees and enemy aliens in Australia.

The Italian situation was considered 'delicate' as many men had sons serving in the British forces in the UK. At the least, there were ten *Dunera* Italians who had sons serving in the British forces, with Arcangelo Andreucci's son being held as a British prisoner of war in Italy.

Release to free movement in the UK however was not a foregone conclusion and was a protracted process. Major Layton interviewed internees and made recommendations based upon individual circumstances. It was then the prerogative of the Home Office to accept Major Layton's recommendations. If a request was approved, approval was only for a return to UK to appear before the *Advisory Committee* and have your case heard. Upon arrival in the UK, the men were re-interned until such times their case was heard. In some cases, Major Layton advised individuals not to make applications as their cases were unlikely to be approved, as they did not comply with any categories outlined in the *White Paper*.

By December 1941, fourteen Italian internees had returned to UK. Of these fourteen, three men were refused release, 20-year-old Alberto Imondi was released as a 'Special Case' and eight were released under Category 22 i.e. having 20 years continuous residency in the UK, severed ties with Italy and showing loyalty toward the UK. The records of the other two men do not state a category under which they were released: one worked in freight logistics and the other in a rubber cable company and might have been released as 'useful to national industry and the war effort'. Ugo Baccanello did not have a decision until a further eight months internment in the UK and was released, without restrictions, on 15 August 1942. Before the Italians left Australia, they had to sign a *Certificate of Willingness to Travel*, such was the dangerous nature of shipping from Australia to the UK.

Another 33 Italian internees returned to the UK for an appearance before the *Advisory Committee* between July 1942 and January 1943. Unfortunately, one ship the *MV Abosso* was torpedoed in October 1942: six Italians died and one survived. Another ship the *SS Waroonga* was torpedoed and sank in April 1943, luckily all three Italian internees survived. The Camp Commandant's report for Camp 2

Tatura, dated 13 November 1942 reported that on the matter of signing the *Certificate of Willingness to Travel*, there was indecision amongst the group.

The conundrum for the remaining internees was 'do I accept a dangerous journey to return to the UK for a tribunal hearing' or 'do I stay safe in Australia, until I can return home a free man.'

Pietro Mariutto explained to Major Layton, Liaison Officer for the British Home Office his position on returning to the UK. He wrote on 25 August 1943, *I obtained some time ago from the Secretary of State, authorisation to return to the UK in order to appear before the Italian Advisory Committee. I did not avail myself of this facility as I was much too scared to undertake a journey of such length in the conditions then existing and being an extremely poor sailor, my sufferings on board SS Dunera were still vivid in my mind. I know that had I gone back to the UK I would have been freed almost immediately, as all my friends who returned and who worked in the same trade or in the same firm as I did, were released immediately on arrival*⁷⁷.

In those uncertain times, only 13 Italian internees returned to the UK in 1944; their journey took them the long way home via Wellington NZ, Panama, Jamaica, and New York. Major Layton recounted that the Italians were reluctant to take risks, their view being 'We have already survived a torpedoed ship and we do not want to do it again.'

⁷⁷ Mariutto Pietro, 1943, NAA:367, C75221, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Tatura Camp 4B

On 16 May 1941 the UK Italian internees were transferred from Camp No. 2 Tatura to Camp No. 4 Tatura. The German Jewish refugees from the *Dunera* had been living in Hay Camp 7 and Camp 8, but Hay Camp 7 and Camp 8 were then allocated to the first 2000 Italian prisoners of war arriving in Australia from the Middle East. The German Jewish refugees were moved from Hay NSW to Tatura Camp 2 and Camp 4 Victoria^{xxviii} and the Italian and German residents of Tatura Camp 2 were moved to Camp 4. (Appendix 6)

Camp 4 had its benefits. Built as a family camp, it provided privacy with twelve compartments in each accommodation hut. Partitions inside the huts provided rooms for two people. Some rooms had a door installed between two twin share rooms to accommodate families with the children. There were six rooms on each side of the hut and each room had a glass window and door. For the first time since the men had left their homes in the UK, they had a small private room which they shared with a friend.

An *Internee Employment Return for July 1941* documented the man hours for Tatura Camp 4 and provides an insight into the work undertaken by the men and the activities they were involved in. In Compound 4B, for the month of July 1941, a total of 8943 man hours was recorded as is shown below. It was noted that there were no sewing machines, woodcutting was hampered by a shortage of tools and the soccer ground was completed. In the carpentry workshops tables and forms for the canteens were made as well as counters, chairs and table tennis tables. Five hundred trees and shrubs were obtained from State Forest Departments which were planted inside the four compounds.

<i>Gardening inside compound: 135 hrs.</i> <i>Woodcutting inside compound: 186 hrs.</i> <i>Woodcutting outside compound: 160 hrs.</i> <i>Carpentry: 135 hrs.</i> <i>Boot Repairs: 56 hrs.</i> <i>Tailoring: 156 hrs.</i> <i>Hairdressing: 180 hrs.</i> <i>Hobbies: 250 hrs.</i> <i>Classes: 58 hrs.</i> <i>Painting: 118 hrs.</i> <i>Drawing: 50 hrs.</i>	<i>Lectures: 6 hrs.</i> <i>Concerts and Shows: 242 hrs.</i> <i>Cook House 3540 hrs.</i> <i>Hospital: 780 hrs.</i> <i>Hygiene, drains etc.: 495 hrs.</i> <i>Hot Water Maintenance: 124 hrs.</i> <i>Canteen: 1380 hrs.</i> <i>Store Room: 15 hrs.</i> <i>Office: 300 hrs.</i> <i>Sports Arena: 457 hrs.</i> <i>Other sports: 120 hrs</i>
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Figure 2: No. 4 Camp Tatura Internee Employment July 1941 Compound B⁷⁸

78 Internment Camps Tatura- Employment Report for July, 1941, 1941, NAA:MP508/1, 255/121/158, National Archives of Australia, Melbourne.

New opportunities presented themselves at Camp 4B. Nicola Cua recalled how the Italians made tennis courts at Camp 4B which was supported by head of sports, Dr Zezi, an amateur Italian tennis champion.

At Camp 4, the football games continued between the Germans and the Italians, and an outside field was cleared for these serious 'Internationals'.

The recreation hall became a centre for social activities, as the Italians looked at new ways to pass their time. Vittorio Tolaini reminisced of his time at Tatura Camp 4. *Making money became a preoccupation of many of us, even though we were prisoners. Some turned their hands to wood or stone carvings, others fashioned rings and trinkets from silver coins. Two enterprising fellows opened a coffee bar in the recreation hall. They put two trestle tables together and used a primus stove, which they had bought through mail order and they served coffee and biscuits. The coffee proved very popular during evenings in the recreation hall when we played cards or chess, Monopoly or other table games. A table tennis set was also acquired through the office and was much in demand by the younger ones.*⁷⁹

Possibly one of these entrepreneurs was Dino Accini. Pre-internment Accini had been instrumental in forming a co-operative of 1200 café owners to benefit their businesses, and then in 1954 imported the largest coffee machine^{xxix} in Great Britain to his restaurant in South Kensington. Accini was clearly entrepreneurial and had an interest in cafés and quality coffee.

The Italians in Tatura Camp 4B were mentioned by Eli Rosenbluth in his diary. They were in a camp diagonally opposite Rosenbluth's camp. Being in a camp with German prisoners of war and Italian internees was a new situation for the Jewish refugees as was having views of the other compounds. Hay Camp 7 and Hay Camp 8 were in different locations without an adjoining barbed wire 'no man's land'. Rosenbluth commented that the Italians and Germans in Tatura Camp 4 had to be in their huts for the playing of the *Last Post* which was not the case for the Jewish refugees in Camps 4C and 4D. Rosenbluth noted in his diary, a group of refugees and internees leaving camp for England on 25 May 1941 including one or two Italians.

Guglielmo Francescon left Tatura Camp under escort on 25 May 1941 for Liverpool Camp, New South Wales. In Sydney, he embarked on the *HMT Largs Bay* on 4 June 1941. On 31 May 1941, Rosenbluth noted that the Italians had some choral music (mass?) and the 'Nazis' sang *Deutschland uber alles*. While the residents in each camp were separated by barbed wire fences, they were however aware of the diverse groups living adjacent to them.

Camp 4 family camp was vacated by the single men on 9 December 1941 to make way for a new intake of married internees and their children from Iran. On 22 December 1941, not long after the bombing of Pearl Harbour, Japanese internees; men and women from Noumea took up residence in Tatura Camp 4B.

⁷⁹ Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 27.

Loveday Camps

On 9 December 1941, 185 UK Italian internees departed Tatura Camp 4B, arriving at Loveday Camp 9 in South Australia on 10 December 1941 at 16.15 hrs. At the time, Romolo Chioconi was in Mooroopna Hospital, Victoria. He would arrive at Loveday Camp 10 on 29 January 1942.

The group now numbered 186 due to those returning to the UK. Ten Italian internees had departed Tatura Camp for Liverpool Camp, NSW on 5 October 1941 to await embarkation on the *Stirling Castle* in Sydney. They were: Attilio Marioni, Antonio Dallanegra, Giuseppe Di Rollo, Antonio Galante, Antonio Greco, Giovanni Negri, Pietro Rengozzi, Giuseppe Spaggiari, Giuseppe Foligno and Alberto Imondi. Giuseppe Salmi and Ugo Baccanello had departed from Port Adelaide, South Australia on the *Rangitiki* on 20 November 1941 while Virginio Bertoluzzi had departed Tatura Camp for Liverpool Camp, NSW on 29 November 1941 to await embarkation on the *Largs Bay* in Sydney.

Giorgio Scola wrote of his first impressions of Loveday Camp 9. *This camp is much larger than the Tatura camps but more untidy and for the numbers here, rather cramped and lacking many facilities. There is a football pitch within the enclosure with a lack of trees and need of shade, many bowers made of leaves and twigs have been erected... On this first evening, a concert is held in our honour, and our own baritone, Matania, makes a hit!...after dusk, searchlights are turned on groups of internees inside the camp. Tonight we sleep for the first time since leaving England on the ground under canvas.*⁸⁰

The UK Italians were moved from Loveday Camp 9 to Loveday Camp 10 on 13 December 1941. The Italian group marched from Camp 9 to Camp 10 in the heat. While the Italian doctors asked for transport for the older men, who were to struggle with the excessive heat, no assistance was given.

On 6 January 1941 Pietro Moscardini was admitted to Barmera Hospital. He was the first UK Italian internee to die in Australia. He died on 18 January 1942 at Barmera Hospital and was buried the same day at Barmera War Cemetery. Pietro Moscardini was thirty-seven years old and had worked as a shopkeeper in Glasgow.

Loveday Camps 9 and 10 were set out in a rectangular pattern with each camp containing 39 buildings to accommodate 1000. (Appendix 7) When the Italian internees arrived at Loveday Camp 10 the only buildings were the core facilities e.g. kitchen, mess, ablutions, laundry, canteen, recreation hall, detention cells. The men bedded down in tents with the task of the residents to build huts for dormitories. The tents had a wooden floor which raised them above the ground.

Vittorio Tolaini made note of the brutal treatment by the guards upon arrival at Loveday Camp 10. He penned, *Our initial treatment at No.10 camp was rough in the extreme. Pushed forward with the aid of rifle butts, we were herded in batches into a large*

⁸⁰ Scola, *12,000 miles behind barbed wire*, 19.

*hut and made to strip, while the guards went through every stitch of clothing. A few of us were subjected to a most degrading search. We were made to bend down while medical orderlies probed us in the back passage to ascertain if we had anything hidden there. It was a terrible experience. Fortunately, it was the only brutal act committed against us while we were in Australia.*⁸¹ Giorgio Scola also wrote about the humiliating and irritating searches at Loveday Camp.

Camp 10 residents were a mixed group of international internees. There were Italian merchant seaman from the *Romolo* which was scuttled off the northeast coast of Australia, and Italian civilians from Palestine. German residents were civilians from Palestine and Iran. Vittorio Tolaini remembered that the camp took on a more exotic international flavour with the arrival of 'white Russians' and members of the French Foreign Legion who only stayed for a short period. The first meals were cooked by the Germans and were none too appealing but in time, the Italians took over the cooking in one of the two kitchens.

The Easter 1942 lunch menu from Loveday Camp illustrated the Italians' sense of humour. Items listed were:- Kangaroo Antipasto, Cannelloni of wind with sand, Beautiful Australia Dessert and Patchy and Co. Coffee. Patchy and Co. referred to Captain 'Patchy' and the Australian guards who were thwarted by the ingenuity of the Italians in hiding their home brewed alcohol.

It was at Loveday Camp 10 that the second UK Italian internee died. Pasquale Pacitti, 52 years old died at the camp compound's hospital on 6 June 1942 and was buried on the same day at Barmera War Cemetery. Pasquale Pacitti was a London terrazzo worker.

Sport facilities included tennis, bowls and skittles courts. Table tennis was popular, and an outside golf course was also used. A café with a garden and outside tables and chairs was constructed and theatre and orchestra performances were staged. International Athletics competitions were held between Germans and Italians.

The UK Italian internees remembered Loveday Camp 10 for its wild red sandstorms which shredded tents and clothing, setting down a football pitch, an Australian Captain they called 'Patchy' because he had a white patch of hair on his head, body searches, gambling on scorpion races, and German internees who attempted escape under the wire and their tunnelling exploits. Venuto Corinti summed up his impression of the camp as being, *a place of six hundred metres, with machine-guns and barbed wire in every corner.*⁸²

Nine months after their arrival in South Australia, the Italian UK Internees departed Loveday on 9 September 1942. The next day, 10 September 1942, the group returned to Tatura Camp 2A and were then sharing the camp with German internees.

⁸¹ Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 28.

⁸² Corinti, Venuto, 1942-1944, NAA:A367, C76035, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Early Release

While in Loveday, on or just after the 12 January 1942, Pietro Pillon, Celeste Servini and Crescenzo Divito were informed by Major Layton that they had been approved to be returned to the UK, for further investigation by the *Advisory Committee*. These men, together with Orlando Ugolini departed Loveday Camp on 19 January 1942 for Victoria. On 26 January 1942 they arrived at Tatura Camp ex Broadmeadows.

The timing of Servini's return to Tatura was fortuitous. On 7 January 1942, the Commonwealth Government had agreed to allow release within Australia of internees held in Australia, on behalf of the UK government. In particular, *As regards to fit men of military age a proposal is under consideration to give them the opportunity of voluntarily enlisting in the labour units of the Australian Military Forces.*⁸³ This was the first mention of the formation of the 8th Employment Company.

By the time Servini reached Tatura, he had two options: return to the UK for the possible release from internment or volunteer and enlist in the soon to be formed 8th Employment Company. He chose the latter.

On 15 March 1942 Servini was 'released to Labour Battalion'. The 8th Employment Company also referred to as the 8th Labour Battalion or Works Company was not formed until 7 April 1942. Those internees released to join the 8th Employment Company were firstly formed into fruit picking detachments on Goulburn Valley orchards. On Servini's Mobilization Attestation Form he lists his current job as 'fruit picker'. At Caulfield, Melbourne on 22 April 1942 Servini formally enlisted in the 8th Labour Company.

Servini was the only *Dunera* Italian internee to join the labour corps.^{xxx} The other three *Dunera* Italians in Tatura Camp at that time were older men, who had chosen to return to the UK.

It was a matter a chance that Servini was in Tatura Camp when the call for volunteers for the 8th Employment Company was made. Servini took the opportunity to enlist and in doing so was released from internment.

A cablegram from Newsam (Home Office UK) to Layton (UK liaison officer in Australia) sent on 24 April 1942 has Servini listed as one of 25 UK internees for which the Home Office had 'no security objection for enrolment in Labour Corps'. The other 24 internees were *Dunera* internees of different nationalities: German, Austrian, Stateless, Hungarian; and religions: Jewish, English Free Church, Alt. Catholic, Roman Catholic and Protestant.

Servini served with the 8th Employment Company and was also temporarily detached to the 4th Employment Company and 6th Employment Corps. He was

⁸³ Internees ex "Dunera," 1942, NAA:A2908, P22 Part 8, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

stationed at Royal Park, later known as Camp Pell, Heidelberg, Broadmeadows and Tocumwal. He was discharged from the 8th Employment Company on 25 May 1945 and arrived in Liverpool England on the *Nieuw Amsterdam* on 21 August 1945.

The 8th Employment Company was a noncombatant company, and the men of the unit did not carry arms. It supported the military by unloading cargo from ships and trains. As the railway gauge was a different size in New South Wales and Victoria, all freight going from one state to the other had to be unloaded and reloaded. The company had a coat of arms with the Latin words: *labora et labora* [work and work], a newsletter *The 8th Gazette* and a Company March. There was a sense of pride in being enlisted in the 8th Employment Company and contributing to the war effort, as opposed to living behind barbed wire, marking time.

Celeste Servini wrote to his brother Lino, interned at Tatura Camp 2A, on 12 August 1943 to encourage him to join the 8th Employment Company. The tide of the war had turned for Italy and dogmatic loyalty to Mussolini and fascist beliefs was useless. On 25 July 1943, Benito Mussolini had resigned as head of the armed forces and the Italian government. Marshal Pietro Badoglio assumed the role of Prime Minister and Chief of Government, and King Victor Emmanuel became the Commander of the armed forces in Italy.

While not explicit, Servini implied that enlistment in the 8th Employment Company was a means to freedom and a much better situation than remaining in Tatura Camp. He encouraged his brother to speak with Major Layton who would assist him in the process. Celeste Servini explained, *...since I have heard from you last, things have changed, you must now realise that you must do everything to regain your freedom, ... don't be stubborn any more, any thoughts of which you might have had must now and once for all be finally shattered, so please for your sake and myself as your brother you must try to be released, to return to England I think is now impossible, so make application to join me, and I am sure Major Layton would do his best for you.*⁸⁴ Lino did not join his brother Celeste in the 8th Employment Company, but was released from Tatura Camp on 16 May 1944 for employment with the Civil Aliens Corps, to work in forestry.

Celeste Servini's choice to join the 8th Employment Company saved his life. Orlando Ugolini and Crescenzo Divito departed Australia late July 1942 for return to England. They were first boarded on the *Westernland* at Sydney, New South Wales, then transshipped at Cape Town, South Africa to the *MV Abosso*. On 29 October 1942, the *MV Abosso* was hit by a torpedo north of the Azores and sank. Ugolini and Divito did not survive.

84 Intelligence reports- Tatura, 1943-1944, NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 3, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Fascism in the camps

The UK Italian internees ostensibly was a homogeneous group. They shared three major life experiences: their Italian heritage, arrest and internment, and the *Arandora Star* sinking. These three experiences kept the 200 men bonded through their 55-day voyage on the *Dunera* making the men further committed to a 'common' enemy: the internment policy of the British government.

Upon arrival in Australia, the next phase of their group experience; settling into daily life in Tatura Internment Camp, required the men to pull together to build an operational community.

There was always an undercurrent of divided political allegiances which would destabilise the group of 200. Power struggles emerged and the Intelligence Officers in Tatura Camp monitored the strength and resilience of the group.

Colonel Borghi noted that the group was sent to Australia branded as 'dangerous Fascists and criminals'. But according to Borghi, 30 to 35 percent had never belonged to the party and never taken interest in politics. Leadership of the group could proceed two ways: a liberal approach, in that regardless of political persuasion or degree of support for fascism, the men must group together to be dignified and accepting of internment and leave politics out of decisions; whereas the second approach was to run the camp as a microcosm of Fascist Italy.

The *Dunera* Italian group splintered and a strong group of 20 emerged as a dangerous gang of rabid fascists. Their goal was simple; to take control of the camp leadership; run the camp along fascist lines of 'manganello' and castor oil^{xxx}, and extol the virtues and victories of Mussolini and his fascist government. Their methods were frightening and dangerous.^{xxxii}

In October 1942, Tatura Camp 2 Intelligence Report clarifies further the situation. Upon return to Tatura Camp 2 on 10 September 1942, the Italians were now sharing a camp with a mixed group of internees. The Camp Report of 7 October 1942 noted, *No. 2 Camp (i) The position in No. 2 Camp is anomalous. In there are a number of Italians, all rabid Fascists. This does not make for easy administration, nor for harmony within the compound, since there are enough Fascists to form an extremely powerful minority. The three types resent each other, and this influence of the Italians must increase as the numbers of the Jews decrease by absorption in the Labour Corps or release.*⁸⁵

Intelligence Officers monitored the fascists. Comments included: member of Italian Embassy in London; wife interned on Isle of Man; uncle in Mussolini's Department of Communication; asked Swiss Consul for repatriation to Italy; slippery and untrustworthy.

85 Intelligence reports, Tatura, 1942-1943, NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 1, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Loyalties and sentiments were expressed in letters. The words penned are interesting:-

5 November 1941 *A group of men in the Compound "A" gathered in front of Hut 5, which is under my command, singing in the Italian language the Italian communist hymn "Bandiera Rossa" otherwise "Red Flag." In view that the singing was intentionally sung in Italian which naturally required a certain training, the singers being mostly German-Jews, I retain the fact in itself a premediated open provocation to our feelings.*⁸⁶

15 September 1942 *Near us are some Jews, you can imagine what harmony there is. I hope then that they will move us very soon and put us with our friends the Germans with whom we spent all our changes of fortune and happiness, especially in the national feasts.*⁸⁷

August 1943 *We must never lose faith in our destiny. Time and time alone can unfold the truth behind the ugly happenings of the past 20 days.*⁸⁸

March 1944 *This is the worst camp, lack of cohesion among the members of the camp and bad leadership. My worst punishment is being coerced to live among the most ignorant crowd of people and malicious.*⁸⁹

Coercion and threats of dire retribution were effective particularly up until July 1943. Lieut. WA Scales, Intelligence Office, Tatura Camp compiled a report on some of the leading fascists in camp. Of Giorgio Boggio he wrote:

*Associates with all the fascists in the compound particularly Poggioli and Pini. S. who are both ardent Fascists. One internee has stated that Boggio was leader of the blackmailing and strong arm gang inside the compound, but in the background. Another internee has stated that Boggio kept a "black book" in which were inscribed the names of all those Italians who had not been politically faithful – this book was stated to have been burnt after the downfall of Boggio's "political god". Has used the Fascist year sign on this letter and has often concluded them with the Fascist war cry "Alala". Intelligence Officer at Tatura reports: "Known to have been a leading light in the Fascist community in the camp and one of its leaders. Suspected of having been a member of the Fascist secret police in London. An ardent Fascist, the more dangerous because of his intellectual attainments and wide influential connections. Camp Commandant at Tatura reports: "Has always been well behaved himself but he has been known to endeavour to cause discontent within the compound."*⁹⁰

Boggio appeared before the Overseas Internees Investigation Board held in Loveday Camp 14D on 2 October 1944. His defence was articulated in a letter he wrote to Mr John Burton, Department of External Affairs, Canberra on 9 October 1944: *I have been given the possibility of stating my case to the Intelligence Jury presided over by Mr. Justice Hutchins of the Tasmania Supreme Court. To my great astonishment I was finally given to me why Col. Layton had refrained from granting his approval. ...a hyperbolic*

86 BIASONI Angelo, 1940-1945, NAA: A367, C74648, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

87 LOMBARDELLI Riccardo, 1941-1944, NAA: A367, C75572, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

88 NAA:MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 3.

89 NAA:MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 3.

90 [Boggio, Giorgio], 1944-1945, NAA:A11797, WP6009, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

*surmise, based on nothing but the small talk of unscrupulous mischief makers who attempted to cover up their past activities. I was made a convenient scapegoat. Though I never belonged to the Fascist Party and have always been immersed in my studies, I was purported to be nothing less than "the political big-nob of the Camp!" ... I am wondering what kind of weight can be given to a "belief" which bears such obvious signs of malicious gossip cunningly started and abetted by fellow-internees who knew precious little about me, and had a very definite object in creating just the impression that was let out at the inquiry. Anyhow I confidently await the result. I showed my good will and honesty both to the U.K. and the Australian authorities, and that is the end of it as far as my conscience is concerned.*⁹¹

Having been appointed as 'proof reader' of a religious newspaper in Melbourne, Boggio wrote to EJH Heyward Esquire Queens College, University of Melbourne, an academic acquaintance to ask for assistance in ascertaining why he was not allowed to remain in Australia to take up employment. On 5 July 1945 Heyward replied, *I have no means of finding out why you are not released here. Obviously there is something on your English record that the authorities don't like, and you could clear that up only in England, I'd imagine. It's a pity.*⁹² Boggio remained behind the barbed wire until his return to England on the *Dominion Monarch* which arrived in Liverpool, England on 2 August 1945. Whatever the 'something' in his English record was, it was sufficient evidence against Boggio to not be released in England. Instead he was repatriated to Italy on 12 November 1945.

Threats against fellow internees were not idle. Intelligence Office Report for Tatura Camp 2 dated 29 July 1943 recorded: *Boggio and Pini S. From an informer, we have learnt that these two internees have threatened:- Borghi G and Zezi G, with, at the termination of war, the penalty of death if they return to Italy, and that all their property and assets will be confiscated, if they did any work outside the compound. Other Italians have been threatened similarly, and to be reported to the Fascist authorities if they did not support the Fascist regime...Information has come to hand that this internee was a Fascist policeman in England, and has been carrying on these duties in the compound since internment in No 2 Camp.*⁹³

Commanding Officer of Tatura Camp 2 Major Hanson completed a Conduct Report for Serafino Pini on 12 July 1943. His opinion was: *Has not been brought before the Camp Commandant for any breaches of Camp Regulations but it is felt that he plays the tune whilst others dance, in reference to Fascist matters. It is recommended that his internment continue.*⁹⁴ Lieut. Scales of Loveday Camp 14D and Captain WB Opie of Tatura Camp 2 formed similar opinions, in that Pini worked underground rather than openly and was one of the most dangerous of the Italian group.

Rocco Forte's association with Serafino Pini and Dorando Borzoni, who were named as active in terrorising those in camp, brought him to the attention of the camp

91 NAA:A11797, WP6009.

92 NAA:A11797, WP6009.

93 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 2.

94 Pini Serafino, 1943-1944, NAA:A367, C74776, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

commandants, Major Hansen and Lieut. Horwood, Tatura Camps and Lieut. WA Scales of Loveday Camp 14D. Specifically, Lieut. Horwood wrote to Major Layton on January 30 1944 outlining why Forte should be transferred to Loveday Camp 14D: *... has been prominent in agitating against the ex-Compound Leader Borghi and the present one, Lembo. At the time of Borghi's departure, when Lembo was proposed for the leadership, Forte bitterly opposed his election and moved a vote of no confidence in him. He was opposed to Lembo as a member of the Borghi collaborationist class, and it is felt that if permitted to remain at No. 2 he would cause unrest and dissension among the other internees. The information leading to this objection has been supplied by Interpreter Staff and by internees themselves.*⁹⁵

After his hearing before the Overseas Internees Investigation Board in Loveday Camp 14D on 2 October 1944, the panel believed Dorando Borzoni's claims that he was no longer a supporter of fascism and would not be a security risk if released in Australia. Borzoni did however feel that he had been victimised as he explained to his wife in a letter on 10 November 1944: *From reading my letters you would have understood I am still interned, not through my fault nor adverse circumstances, but rather, victimised by certain individuals and unjustly detained by the English authorities, because the reasons for keeping me interned do not exist any more, if they existed before. They talk so much of justice, humanity and civilization! I think it is time they put it into practice. I maintain that towards me nothing but injustice is shown commencing from the moment I was interned.*⁹⁶ However his views on fascism were clearly highlighted by these words to his son to be 'a good Italian and a faithful Fascist' and his comment of 'Romeo's outrageous behaviour' when his brother joined the Pioneer Corps in England.

Providing insight into views held by internees on another leading fascist Angelo Biasoni, Dino Accini confided in his friend Gino Guarnieri on 25 September 1944. Accini wrote, *That hypocrite, scoundrel, cretin has been released or at least notified of release. I think he deserves to be removed from internment camp to be put in prison for 20 years. Do not think me too vindictive, but when I think that he has done nothing but render life in camp more burdensome than ever, I can do nothing less than wish him all that he wished us in these last years.*⁹⁷

Rando Bertoia recalled, *Some Italians were 100 percent anti-British... I have to keep quiet, some of them were very hot headed. The ones from Scotland, I found to be less interested, but some of the ones from London were real fascisti. They kept us on our toes, but most of us were not that way inclined: we were just Italians.*⁹⁸ There is an honesty in Bertoia's perspective on the camp situation, but the situation was to change in March 1944.

Colonel Borghi's role as camp leader was one of impartiality and his priority was for the wellbeing of all men in the camp. He was a patriotic Italian and an anti-fascist. He was targeted by the fascists and Borghi revealed to his wife on 2 August 1943 the

95 Forte Rocco, 1943-1945, NAA:A367, C74996, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

96 Borzoni Dorando, 1942-1945, NAA:A367 C74719, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

97 Accini Dino, 1943-1945, NAA: A36, C74676, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

98 Bertoia, "Appendix Internment Testimonies," 233.

details of the previous three years. Borghi reflected, *I have never told you before, as I did not want to worry you unduly, but these three years of internment and leadership of this group of Italians has been three years of real Hell. The majority of these people are good living people of good sentiments... But there is a small minority amongst them all hot-headed fascists who have made me suffer beyond words. They have wanted since the beginning to rule this camp on true fascist lines, through castor oil and bludgeons. I have been opposed, since the very first day, to such form of political activity in its extreme and in this I was comforted by the great majority of men. I have been accused of being anti-Italian, anti-fascist, free-mason (and we know what this means in Italy)... I have been sentenced to death – do not laugh, it is the truth – as soon as I should have returned to Italy, and there have been moments when I have really been afraid.*⁹⁹ Borghi was targeted because he was camp leader and his opposite wanted that power.

The leader of the fascists in camp, like Italy's leader Mussolini wanted complete power over the *Dunera* Italians and used force and threats to suppress opposition and free thought.

The 200 Italians were a diverse group. Intelligence Officers categorised the political persuasions and influences as younger men who could be easily swayed, pro-British older men whose family, financial, and business interests were secured in the UK, the middle group who were 'true Italians' concerned for their motherland, or 'rail sitters' or staunch fascist.

Initially what divided the Italians was where they came from in the UK. They arrived at Liverpool Dock from Wales, Scotland and England with a subgroup of Londoners. A friendly accent will always draw groups of people together. As new friendships formed within the camps of Australia the younger men were drawn together by their interests in sports and sense of adventure; Londoners by their association with restaurants and hospitality. However, the reason for their internment, that is being a member of the fascist party and/or fascist in political views would not unify the group; rather it was to be the most divisive factor within the group.

⁹⁹ NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 2.

The Every Day of Life

Regardless of which camp the men lived in, daily life took on a routine: work, letter writing, sport, hobbies, classes, tending gardens, theatre and concert rehearsals. Friends congregated to discuss their return home applications and share news from home. Attention was also paid to the current progress of the war: Pearl Harbour and America's entry into the war, the bombings in England, the landing at Normandy, the armistice.

It was considered desirable for the internees to be engaged in work for physical and mental health reasons and there was no shortage of camp duties to sign up for.

The camp infirmary was staffed by Dr Zezi and Dr Manzocchi with Giacomo Barovero working as a hospital orderly and Luigi Beschizza acting as a dental orderly. Colonel Borghi was assisted in the office by Giovanni Osmetti, Rando Bertoia, Vittorio Tolaini and Giuseppe Lembo. Nicola Cua was canteen manager, and worked with Enrico Casci and Ermenegildo Guido, then when Nicola Cua left camp, Giovanni Osmetti took over the role.

Michele Caira worked as a camp tailor and watch maker, and it is thought that garden party worker Emilio Rossi, also worked as a tailor in the camp. Ernesto Cordani worked as the compound boot repairer. Garden party workers included Giuseppe Costan, Arcangelo Andreucci, Rando Bertoia, Emilio Previdi, Giuseppe Montini, Antonio Cavaciuti and Mario Croci.

The men also designed gardens and constructed edgings with Sisto Ferrarin working in the camp improvements party and cement party. Many men also kept their own vegetable plots outside their hut. Umberto Scaravelli worked in the garden party and made fenders. Dino Accini worked in the kitchen but also was involved with the wood party and rope fender making. Ugo Ugolini also made fenders and was involved with mop manufacturing. Amilcare Cima and Michele Coia were members of the carpentry party along with Adolfo Felloni, who also undertook painting and general maintenance work. Francesco Rabaiotti worked in the sand and firewood party while Venuto Corinti was noted as doing plumbing jobs. Pietro Mariutto, Giuseppe Lusardi, mentioned as an excellent tradesman, worked with Pietro Mariutto as carpenters in the camp maintenance group.

Riccardo Lombardelli was also involved with camp maintenance with Antonio Rabaiotti only joining a camp work party after the Italian Armistice when he involved himself with the garden party. A constant worker, Francesco Mattiussi made concrete bricks while Enrico Fortura and Antonio Saccomani were part of the hygiene/sanitation party. Arturo Nazzari oversaw the hygiene and sanitation of the camp and managed the roster to ensure the daily cleaning of camp facilities. Leandro Strola worked in the kitchen and did odd jobs around the camp. Brothers Santo and Angelo Albericci were mess orderlies, together with Libero Roveto, Emilio Sampietro, Guido Galbiati and Dorando Borzoni. Angelo Albericci, Roveto and

Galbiati additionally worked in the garden party. Mario Rabaiotti worked in the tennis court maintenance work group. Carlo Martinez installed the electrical wiring and fittings in the new compound at Tatura Camp 2A with Luigi Poggioli documented as doing electrical work in camp. Primo Pinagli worked in the Garrison QM Stores and tended his own garden inside camp. Outside of camp, Carlo Barsotti worked in the grubbing party. Running a camp of 200 men required a diverse workforce and men who were content to learn new skills.

Working on the camp farm or in the wood cutting project gave the men a walk outside the barbed wire. It also assisted in making the camps self-supporting as much as possible. Camp 2 had a 12-acre farm where onions, silver beet, cauliflowers, lettuces and cabbages were grown with the produce harvested supplied to the internee and Garrison kitchens. Dorando Borzoni and Santo Corna worked in the farm garden party. Giovanni Baldelli worked with both the camp wood and farm parties. Andrea Terroni, a constant worker on camp projects, Pietro Cabrelli, Marco Gazzi and Crescenzo Divito joined the wood party, as did Luigi Beschizza, Manfredo Pini and Iginio Toffolo.

Marco Gazzi explained to his brother Mario on 12 July 1943 about his day wood cutting. He noted, *Today we have been working at the wood depot. I have been very surprised to see how much wood we have cut - about 3000 tons. The captain in charge of the work was so pleased he gave us each a pair of boots.*¹⁰⁰ This daily freedom was a small concession but appreciated and productive.

Letter writing would consume some men. Dr Zezi kept busy with writing letters and reading received correspondence. He sent letters to the Japanese Consul via the Swiss Consul in Melbourne. He received visits from a representative of the Swiss Consul, Rosa Buffa of the Japanese Consulate and RJ Scott Williams Esq in Sydney, the Australian Representative for Elizabeth Arden Limited. He engaged the services of a legal firm in London and Melbourne: Davies, Campbell and Piesse who would also work with Pietro Gallo. Zezi contacted Bluestar Cold Storage in Sydney asking to contact Lord Vesty on his behalf. His wife visited the Home Office in London with Lady Penelope Clementi (wife of Lord Cecil Clementi, ex-Governor of Hong Kong and the Settlement Straits). Zezi also made application for a visa to enter the USA. In 1941-1942, he asked to be seen by the Mixed Medical Condition for consideration for repatriation to Italy, which unfortunately cancelled out his application for consideration to be returned to UK. This led to further letters to remedy the error. He made applications in 1941 and April 1943 to return to the UK, but they were not approved. Zezi was officially approved to return to the UK on 30 November 1943. Although Zezi had 'friends in high places' it was soon clear that internment was a great leveller.

Dr Zezi's connections with Elizabeth Arden Ltd did however provide some light entertainment. Zezi would receive parcels of items from Elizabeth Arden with one

¹⁰⁰ Gazzi Marco, 1943-1948, NAA: A367, C75775, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

parcel containing June Geranium Soap and Eau de Cologne; fragrances the men had not smelt in a long time. Nicola Cua remembered an occasion when friends, as a lark sprayed Zezi's cologne over Cua's mattress. The younger men were more spirited and enterprising.

At Loveday Camp in 1942, a gambling business was established. Vittorio Tolaini and friends made the most of a bad situation; the pesky scorpions in their tents. Tolaini remembered, *The more daring of us caught and bottled a few scorpions and opened a gambling business. Two scorpions marked with different coloured paints were placed in the centre of a drawn circle. This rather dangerous pastime didn't last long. Colonel Borghi heard about it and stopped it.*¹⁰¹

Building tennis courts and football fields were worthwhile pursuits. The tasks gave the men a focus and a purpose. Planning, sourcing equipment, recruitment of a workforce and finally the new camp facilities which added additional activities.

One preoccupation was news of the European war. Vittorio Tolaini's letter to his mother on 10 September 1943 explained, *...At breakfast yesterday morning I heard the news of the end of the war between the Allies and Italy. To me it brought a great relief as no doubt as also to millions of other people. I only hope now that all the war may soon finish so that the misery and suffering of everybody will at last end. I hope that it will not be long before I am allowed to return to you all where as long as I could be released I would undertake any kind of work the authorities think fit to make me do.*¹⁰² Monte Cassino was taken by the Allies on 18 May 1944 and the Allied forces broke out from Anzio on 23 May 1944. The Fifth Army had entered Rome on 4 June 1944 and Pelosi composed a letter to his wife on 7 June 1944 after the landing of the Allies at Normandy. Pelosi explained his feelings at that time, *So I'm quite happy when I get news from you all well at home... I did rejoice the splendid news last night, we shan't be long now please God for victory and peace and reunion with all our dear family.*¹⁰³ The Italians were left to ponder the continued devastation and loss of life for a war they were far removed from.

Thinking about a return home was a major preoccupation. Despite the men being a step closer to ending internment, the news was bittersweet. The danger of ships being torpedoed and the death of six of their group on the MV *Abosso* called for caution, as Rossi and Rabaiotti discussed in letters. Emilio Rossi explained to his wife on 26 January 1943 with his thoughts for his family's safety. He explained, *I have read with trepidation the renewed bombardments of London and I have thoughts of Lawrence and Nandi and our home. I hope that you Luisa are at Oxford and that a Star watches over our two children. Have you seen Sartor or any of them? [referring to those already returned home] He was fortunate, not like others. [referring to the Italians who died on the MV *Abosso*].*¹⁰⁴

101 Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 32-33.

102 Tolaini Pacifico, 1943, NAA:A367, C75470, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

103 Intelligence Reports- Tatura, 1944, NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 4, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

104 Rossi Emilio, 1941-1944, NAA:A367, C75027, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Francesco Rabaiotti explained to his wife on 9 September 1943, *This morning we heard of the armistice but you will understand we will all be contented to run away out of here... We hope it will be soon, but the difficulties of the voyage always remain. It is a real obstacle which has held a lot of us here.*¹⁰⁵ While eager to sign the Certificate of Internees of Willingness to Travel in 1944, men did rescind their permission to travel as options opened for work placements within Australia and an escape from the barbed wire.

Friendships formed during internment would take the men beyond internment. Dino Accini and Venuto Corinti worked together in Dino's Limited London. Accini and Corinti were both directors when they applied for a licence to sell retail beer and wine at restaurant premises at Pelham Street and Thurloe Street, Kensington in February 1960. Vittoria Tolaini and his wife Noemi set up San Remo Restaurant in Tooting with Nicola Cua, with Tolaini reflecting in 1982: *Nicky lives close to us and our friendship has been cemented over 40 years.*¹⁰⁶ At Angelo 'Peter' Ghisoni's wedding in Chiltern Victoria 1949, guests included Rizzieri Ferrucci, Arturo Nazzari and Emilio Previdi of London. Nicola Cua, Luigi Beschizza and Vittorio Tolaini set up the camp library and remained friends for life with Cua and Beschizza returning to Australia in 1991.

Despite the Italians being frustrated with their continued internment, some men did acknowledge their good treatment by the Australian authorities. Giuseppe Costan penned a letter to a family friend on 22 September 1943 and explained, *I hope I shall succeed at last to free myself of this dreadful life and be able to return and to do something useful for the country that have given me 35 years of happiness. The authorities here and all others have always been good, generous and understanding toward us.*¹⁰⁷

Emilio Rossi wrote to his wife from Tatura Camp 4 on 20 September 1941: *The Australian Officials are Gentlemen and do their best to make imprisonment less severe, but in England we did not find things the same.*¹⁰⁸

After an operation at 28 Australian Camp Hospital Waranga, Giovanni Osmetti wrote a sincerely worded letter to the Commandant, Tatura Camp 2:

3 Dec.43.

Sir,

I wish to express to you and the Camp Medical Officer my sincerest thanks for the facilities afforded to me in connection with my recent operation, which I am now extremely glad to have undergone and of which I am already feeling beneficial results.

And, if I may, I would ask you to convey my deepest gratitude to the Commandant of Waranga Hospital, the Cpt. Hands who performed the operation, and to the sisters and Hospital Staff who so kindly and unsparingly attended me during my stay there.

105 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 3.

106 Tolaini, *Voyage of an Alien*, 36.

107 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 3.

108 NAA:A367, C75027.

Yours faithfully,

G. Osmetti.¹⁰⁹

Conversely, the authorities acknowledged the gentle class of men and the younger men with kind words. Some of the comments written into the Camp Reports were:

Leandro Strola - *a quiet industrious type who has shown no political leanings, his main concern being to reunite with his wife and child whom he has never seen;*

Ernesto Cordani - *quiet, retiring disposition;*

Nicola Cua - *a good type with a good personality and is popular among the others;*

Marco Gazzi - *industrious and clean cut;*

Giovanni Baldelli - *rather retiring nature;*

Vito Gallinari - *a true Italian, proud of his country but not interested in politics;*

Guido Galbiati - *quiet, industrious, sincere type;*

Fortunato Jannetta - *quiet, industrious type;*

Emilio Rossi - *has always worked on camp projects and his conduct has been exemplary;*

Michele Caira - *has always been an excellent worker and never given any trouble whatsoever;*

Gerolamo Manzocchi - *quiet type and obliging;*

Giuseppe Moruzzi - *a good type who has shown his willingness to assist the authorities.*

Thirty men would depart Australia during 1942. The *Themistocles* departed Sydney, New South Wales on 17 July 1942 with 17 onboard: Guglielmo Biagi, Giovanni Bruno, Angelo Coli, Giovanni Crolla, Giovanni D'Ambrosio, Luigi Di Ciacca, Giovanni Dorà, Alessandro Edoni, Filippo Guidobaldi, Marcello Papa, Pietro Pillon, Ennio Politi, Decio Rossi, Giuseppe Saporiti, Vittorio Sartor, Santi Stefani and Angelo Sterlini.

Another group of six departed Sydney, New South Wales late October 1942 on the *Desirade*. The men Antonio Di Rollo, Favorino Enrione, Bernado Franchetti, Elia Novello, Antonio Berni and Angelo Greco were transshipped to the *Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt* and arrived in Liverpool mid January 1943.

Life was not easy in an internment camp. The barbed wire and watch towers were constant reminders of their status. Keeping a routine, optimism, remaining active and socially engaged were keystones to weathering the years spent away from home and family.

109 Osmetti Giovanni, 1941-1945, NAA:367, C75834, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Photographs and Documentation

Army photographers were allowed to take photographs of groups of internees, excluding Japanese. In 1943 army photographer Colin Halmarick took photographs of the *Dunera* Italians at Tatura Camp 2A. His collection of photos in the Australia War Memorial offers a glimpse of the Italians held in Australia.

The men were allowed to purchase a maximum of four copies of photographs in which they appeared. Gino Guarnieri sent a copy of his photo home to his mother. In the photo his hair is curly, he believed that his hair had turned curly from the shock of the *Arandora Star* experience, but his mother thought otherwise. Gino recalled that his mother noticed that his hair was curled and she thought that he had a hairdresser curl his hair. She thought he had gone a little crazy.

Rando Bertoia was told to rewrite his letter dated 31 December 1942 but his comments about photographs provide further information about the group photos. He wrote, *Here they have given permission for our photographs to be taken, but only in groups of ten and we cannot keep them ourselves. We must either send them or leave the photos in the hands of the Commandant. I do not know why they do these foolish things but I hope they know.*¹¹⁰ The Australia War Memorial records note the photos were taken 13 February 1943. But some men who were photographed were not at Tatura Camp on that date. For example, Giuseppe Crolla is in one photo, but he departed Australia on 29 January 1943. Additionally, Michele Fagiano was at the 28 Australian Camp Hospital, Waranga^{xxxiii} before 31 December 1942 and after 27 January 1943. The photos were most likely taken between 8 and 12 January 1943 as during this period Antonio D'Agostino was at 28 ACH and therefore does not appear in the photographs.

Giovanni Moruzzi sent home to England a copy of the photo he was in. He carefully notated on the back of the photo the surnames of the men in the photo. Giorgio Scola and Alessandro Pacitti shared their copies with Dr Terri Colpi for inclusion in her book *Italians Forward* (1991) remembering the names of many of the men in the photos.

Some men took the opportunity to have their photo with different groups of friends. One example is Antonio Alonzi who was photographed with two groups of men.

One photo includes Willi Mertes, the only German internee to be photographed with the Italians. Captured in Rio de Janeiro on 2 April 1940 he was then taken to the UK and travelled on the *SS Arandora Star* and the *HMT Dunera*. He was one of the 251 German internees disembarked at Melbourne. He lists his occupation as 'ship's engineer'.

¹¹⁰ Bertoia Nilo Rando 1943, NAA:A367 C75798, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

In August 1942, Mertes was beaten up by the fascist element in Tatura Camp 2B and held in a detention cell for his own protection until a transfer to Camp 2A for his safety.

This is why Mertes was in Camp 2A when the photographs were taken. By February 1943, there were only ten *Dunera* Germans in Camp 2A and 155 *Dunera* Germans in Camp 2B.



Figure 3: Tatura, Australia. January 1943. Group of Italian internees from overseas now interned at Tatura Internment Camp. Back row, left to right: S. Ferrarin; A. Alonzi; G. Baldelli; E. Galante; G. Felloni; W. Mertes. Front row: G. Crolla; G. Pelosi; G. Moccogni; P. Moccogni.¹¹¹

Additionally, Mertes' records provide documents completed for all *Dunera* internees, but are missing in the *Dunera* Italian folios. One important document is the *Order for Detention of Enemy Alien*, which outlined the authority under which the *Dunera* passengers had been interned.

Each of the *Dunera* Italians would have been presented with a copy of this personalised document. This was probably the first official explanation as to why the men were in Australia.

¹¹¹ Colin Thomas Halmarick, *Tatura, Australia, 1943*, Photograph. Australian War Memorial, Canberra. <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C347748>.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

ORDER FOR DETENTION OF ENEMY ALIEN.

WHEREAS by Regulation 20 of the National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations it is provided that if the Minister or any person authorised by the Minister to act under that regulation is of opinion that it is necessary or expedient in the interests of the public safety, the defence of the Commonwealth or the efficient prosecution of the war to detain any enemy alien he may make an order directing that the enemy alien be detained:

AND WHEREAS the Minister has, pursuant to the provisions of section 17 of the National Security Act, 1939-1940, delegated to me, Captain Albert Richard Heighway, an officer of the Adjutant-General's Branch at Army Headquarters, the powers and functions conferred upon him by Regulation 20 of the National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations insofar as the exercise of those powers is necessary for the purpose of making Orders for the detention in Australia of those persons on board His Majesty's Transport "Dunera," who have been sent from the United Kingdom to Australia for internment in Australia in accordance with arrangements entered into by the Government of the Commonwealth and the Government of the United Kingdom:

AND WHEREAS I am of opinion that it is expedient in the interests of the public safety, the defence of the Commonwealth, or the efficient prosecution of the war that Willi MERTES being an enemy alien on board His Majesty's Transport "Dunera," who has been sent from the United Kingdom to Australia for internment should be detained:

NOW THEREFORE I do hereby order that the said Willi MERTES shall be detained.

Dated this Third day of September, One thousand nine hundred and forty.

(Sgd.) A.R. Heighway,
Captain.

Figure 4: Order for Detention of Enemy Aliens:¹¹² ex- HMT Dunera

¹¹² Mertes Willi, 1939-1945, NAA:1103/2, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

A Blow for the Fascists

1943 was a difficult year for the men. There was a strong division between the die-hard supporters of fascism and Mussolini and those who rallied around the King and the new Government of Italy.

In July 1943, Allied troops landed in Sicily. By order of King Vittorio Emanuele III, Mussolini was arrested on the 25 July 1943. Luigi Vergano wrote to his wife Maria on August 16 1943 discussing his views on the state of affairs: *After the fall of that man who held the Italians under his fist, and then brought them to ruin, that vain Musso, like Nero, who pretended that they worshipped him and that they went down on their knees before his strutting, the strutting that was studied like an actor's on the stage, I believed that after his fall there would be peace for us with our old friends and allies, not apparent, but I hope it will not be long in coming.*¹¹³

The Italian government signed the *Armistice of Cassibile* on 3 September 1943 and German forces took control of Northern and Central Italy. These events challenged the personal philosophies of the men with reactions of incredulity; this was surely lies and propaganda. 'Strong arm' fascists in the camp laid low and showed disinterest in political news from Europe.

The effect on the morale of the group of Italians was noted. Weekly notations from Intelligence Office for December 1943 are insightful and reflective. The report recorded, *During the current week of festivities [Christmas] the conduct of internees has given every indication that morale at No 2 Camp is good and in most instances amongst the Italians, those who at early internment had developed a leaning toward the Fascists, have become more docile and almost apologise for former attitude.*¹¹⁴ The fortunes of war for the Italian Government had changed dramatically during 1943 which included a complete reversal of allegiances from Germany to the Allies.

A somewhat disillusioned Giorgio Scola, a university student of architecture, sent a letter to his mother in England on 5 October 1943. His reflected, *On the 20th of last month I sent you an air mail letter, following the sudden changes that were taking place in Italy, to inform you that I am now ready to follow whatever course may seem best under the circumstances. I feel you must have enough confidence to rely on my judgement and my plans, not only for now, but so that later I may give you the support you deserve and may need... Meantime I fervently yearn for a final peace, but please let us not mention the war situation, because it is too confusing and saddening... ..*¹¹⁵ Thoughts were now turned to an end to the war and an end to internment.

113 Vergano Sisto Luigi, 1943-1944, NAA: A367, C75617, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

114 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 3.

115 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 3.

Changing Landscape of Internment

On 30 November 1943, thirteen of the group departed Tatura Camp 2 for return to the United Kingdom and consideration for release. Upon arrival in Cardiff, Wales, all were re-interned on the Isle of Man until their cases were heard. Nicola Cua penned a letter on 30 November 1943 to explain the shifting physical and emotional landscape of internment. Cua penned, *...I am really moody and miserable. Some of our best men have left and what a parting it was after having shared three and a half years of imprisonment with them. The camp seems different and emptier and I only hope that something will be done for us soon.*¹¹⁶ Among this group was Giovanni Borghi who had been camp leader. The size of the Italian UK group was now 135. Sixty had returned to UK, one was attached to the 8th Labour Battalion and four had died in Australia. More changes were to come.

Proposals were made in September 1943 for Tatura Camp 2A to be split into smaller compounds. At other camps, there had been issues in large camp compounds where minority groups were incompatible with majority groups, and having smaller compounds was seen as a solution. Camp 2 was now split into three compounds. Forty-year-old fruit and produce importer Giuseppe Vincenzo Lembo took over the role of camp leader from Borghi and the Italians now shared their compound with Germans, one Austrian and one Czech.

During 1944, an *Overseas Internees Investigation Board*^{xxxiv} was established with Mr Justice Hutchins of the Tasmanian Supreme Court, appointed as chairman. The role of the board was: *To ascertain if any aliens sent to Australia by the British Government for internment can safely be released.*¹¹⁷ The board convened at Tatura Camps on 20 June 1944 and 11 October 1944 and at Loveday Camps on 2 and 3 October 1944. The board ruled on internees who were 'to be released under supervision' and for whom 'release was unconditional'. Several *Dunera* Italians appeared before the board.

When Lembo joined the Civil Aliens Corps on 27 June 1944, Nicola Cua took on the leadership role for the Italian group, until his release to employment in Melbourne c. October 1944.

By August 1944, with transfers to Loveday Camp, parole for employment to Civil Aliens Corp and release to private employment, Tatura Camp 2A housed 43 *Dunera* Italians, 4 UK Germans, 1 German local, 1 Italian from Malaya States.

Thirty one *Dunera* Italian would spend their fifth Christmas behind the barbed wire with sixteen men in Loveday Camp 14D and fifteen men in Tatura Camp 2A.

116 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 2.

117 "What is Happening in Your Home State," *Army News*, August 20, 1944.
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/page/3355609>.

Power Plays

There were those among the Italian UK internees who had an undue influence on others in the group. Specifically, there were hardline fascists who used threats of violence to maintain their power within the camp.

A strategy to break up compound cliques and dissipate Fascist 'gang' control was employed early 1944, which resulted in the UK Italian internee group broken up. In a reorganisation of A.M.F personnel and security arrangements at No. 2 Camp Tatura, a directive was issued to *reduce the holdings to approx. 200 internees regarded as non-dangerous internees, of whom most may be released or sent overseas shortly*.¹¹⁸ A group of 28 *Dunera* Italian were removed from Tatura Camp to Loveday Camp. Despite the Camp Commandant only recommending the removal of one Italian, it appears that Major Layton made a different recommendation. Possibly Major Layton was privy to information supplied to him by the Home Office which led him to his decision.

This move was tactical. During November 1943, interrogations were conducted by the Tatura Camp Commandant who then forwarded, to Major Layton, conduct reports for the men. Recommendations were made regarding 'risk to security if released in Australia' and 'political allegiances.' Without threats from likely agitators and pro-fascists, the remaining Tatura Italians were free to choose their options for parole release.

On 7 March 1944, a group of 40 UK internees departed Tatura Camp 2 for Loveday Camp 14D. In this group were 28 Italian and 12 German UK internees. The departed group arrived at Loveday Camp 14D on 8 March 1944.

The successful outcome of this strategic move was confirmed by Giovanni Baldelli in a letter he wrote to JA Jacobs Esq of Box Hill. The letter reads, *11 April 1944 Our conditions have changed for the better can meantime be reckoned by the fact that the camp has been cleared of most of the troublesome Fascist elements and that many restrictions have now been removed*.¹¹⁹ While conditions improved for the Tatura Italians, those sent to Loveday found the change difficult.

Loveday Camp 14 complex consisted of four compounds each accommodating 1000 internees, set out in a hexagonal pattern. (Appendix 8) The size of the camp complex was daunting compared with Camp 10 Loveday and Camps 2 and 4 Tatura. Giorgio Scola was none too pleased with his move to Loveday Camp, and in a detailed letter to The Camp Commandant 14 C/D Camp Loveday, questioned why the Home Office had rejected his second appeal for permission to return to the UK for trial. More importantly, Scola's comments about his move to Loveday infers that the move to Loveday was tactical. He explained, *That in my latest transferrment to this camp, I (and others of my group) have been cut off from friendships made during internment,*

118 Adjutant General 6 (b) Internees, Adjutant General 13 (a) Prisoners of War, January - April 1944, AWM52 Australian Military Forces, Army headquarters, formation and unit diaries, 1939-1945, AWM52 1/1/13/5, Australian War Memorial, 5.

119 Baldelli Giovanni, 1941-1942, NAA: A367 C 76010, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

*amongst people who shared a certain measure of common interests and experiences, and instead have been quartered among people with whom I have little or no affinity or sympathy, for various primary reasons.*¹²⁰ The move to Loveday Camp 14 gave the internees time for quiet contemplation.

Loveday Camp 14D was unsettling for these 28 UK Italians. They became a minority group within a camp which also accommodated 85 local German internees and 211 local Italian internees. Whatever power these men might have developed over the other UK Italians in the three and a half years that they had been together dissipated. This move to Loveday was a seismic shift in their status quo.

A report from the *Overseas Internees Investigation Board* at Loveday Camp on 3 October 1944 highlights the dramatic change for Celeste Gauna. This was noted and documented, *The reports from Tatura where this man was interned for over three years were not good. He was characterised as an ardent and violent Fascist and untrustworthy. On the contrary, since his detention for seven months at Loveday, the Camp Commandant's report and the Intelligence Officer's report is satisfactory. He is characterised as being a good type, very willing with a clean camp record. On the face of it, these official reports are startling since they are entirely opposed to each other. The board feels that the apparent change of attitude may be caused not only by the progress of the war but also by reason of the greater freedom and better facilities which exist at Loveday for segregation of various shades of political opinion.*¹²¹ Raffaele Pini while in Tatura Camps did not engage in camp projects but during his time in Loveday Camp, he involved himself in the garden party. The sojourn at Loveday Camp had had its desired effect.

The only other items of note for the men sent to Loveday were accidents incurred by Domenico Cenci, café proprietor and Celeste Gauna, chef. On 28 September 1944, Gauna sustained an injury to his little finger while opening cans of beef. The finger required four stitches and Gauna made claim for sick leave payment for the days he could not work. Then on 17 October 1944, Domenico Cenci also sustained an injury for which a Court of Inquiry was held. The ruling was that he had been accidentally hurt, no blame was attached to anybody and the 1/- per day was to be paid while he was incapacitated.

This group of 28 Loveday Camp Italian UK internees filtered back to Tatura Camp 2A from 23 May 1944 until 31 January 1945. Some of the group appeared before the *Overseas Internees Investigation Board* on 2 and 3 October 1944. The reports written made recommendations regarding release in Australia for the individuals. All men were returned to Tatura, but those with a negative report remained in Tatura until embarkation for UK.

120 Scola Giorgio, 1941-1944, NAA: A367, C74980, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

121 Gauna Celeste, 1943-1945, NAA: A376, C75101, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

A Last Supper

A beautifully scribed menu dated 12 May 1944¹²² lists the courses for the meal of the day and it is likely that this was a celebratory meal; a 'last supper' before men were released in Australia.

Menu

Delicatezza di Cappelletti al Funghetto

Filetti di pesce Persico

Panicelli imbottiti all' Ortolana

Dindo novello arrosto

Lattughe abraugiati (?) al Cardello

Patatine rosolate alla Casalina

Garzuoli d'insalate riccia

Pere coscia dodici Maggio

The 12 May 1944 was a Friday and four days later 33 of the Italians were released from internment to work with the Civil Aliens Corps.

The next group to depart Tatura Camp were Vittorio Tolaini, Luigi Beschizza and Pietro Strina who were released on 29 May 1944 to begin work at Dookie Agricultural College in country Victoria.

Previously, on 4 May 1944, chefs Bartolomeo Calderoni and Ugolino Giovine had submitted their curriculum vitae as part of their process for release. A 6 May 1944 letter from D. Cameron, Deputy Director-General to The Secretary, Department of Defence gave approval for Calderoni, Giovine and Ermenegildo Guido (head waiter) to be employed at the Menzies Hotel, Melbourne. All three were released from Tatura Camp on 1 June 1944.

Also released on 1 June 1944 were Riccardo Freppoli to work for Mr Ditterick, Melbourne and Giuseppe Zaninetta to work at the Melbourne Club, Melbourne. Antonio Alonzi, Luigi Minchella and Sisto Ferrarin were released to Melbourne on 15 June 1944 for work with De MarcoBros. The Commercial Travellers Association employed Luigi Vergano and Francesco Capra upon their release on 20 June 1944.

Vittorio Bechelli, Giuseppe Lembo, Francesco Mattiussi, Primo Pinagli and Andrea Terroni last saw the barbed wire fences of Tatura Camp when they left for work with the Civil Aliens Corps on 27 June 1944.

122 P-06536.

Release to Civil Aliens Corps

It does not appear to be a coincidence that two days after the 28 Italian internees were sent to Loveday Camp 14D, a representative from the Allied Works Council (AWC) visited Tatura Camp 2A. Without the strong personalities in camp, the other Italian internees were now free to make decisions for themselves. Mr Gardyne, Controller of Aliens, AWC gave a presentation regarding the type of work the Italians would be engaged in if they joined the Civil Aliens Corps (CAC).

Two months later, the first group of 33 UK Italian internees was released for work with the Civil Aliens Corps. They had signed up for work in the forestry industry as wood cutters, and were released from Tatura Camp on 16 May 1944. They were classified as 'released aliens on parole'. Each man was issued with A *Direction to Serve* notice.

Either Mr Gardyne waxed lyrically about the work and accommodation in the forest camps, or the Italians were eager to escape the repetitive nature of internment, but the men were ill-prepared for work in the Civil Aliens Corps. Among the group sent to wood cutting in state forests were restaurant proprietors, a school master, a wine butler, shopkeepers and waiters. The only men prepared for this type of work might have been those involved in the building industry as terrazzo, concrete and mosaic workers. The idea of a 55-year-old Scottish ice cream vendor being sent to cut timber is quite ludicrous, but then again, maybe Mario Croci was prepared to sign up for anything as long as he was out of Tatura Camp. Or more likely gentle persuasion was applied, with a promise that signing up for work with the CAC, could expedite a return to England.

The Civil Aliens Corps group was sent to East Peechelba Camp. Some CAC workers wrote back to their friends in Tatura Camp complaining about the deplorable primitive conditions under which they lived, with specific references to the lack of light and hot water. Initially, the Italian UK internees were to be kept together as a group but Riccardo Lombardelli was reassigned to light labour at Stanley Forest Camp for medical reasons. The workers would be required to walk two to four miles from the camp to their place of work, fell trees then load timber onto jinkers. Some men complained of ill health despite medical clearances and others complained that the walk was too far; some work was paid per day and other work was paid as 'piece work'. These forestry camps consisted of huts and tents. The men had to pay for food, but they were allowed alcohol. Possibly, the younger ones like Pietro Beschizza, aged 22 and Rando Bertoia, aged 24 were better prepared for working and living in the Australian bush. They accrued holiday and sick leave and were entitled, with permission, to visit friends in Melbourne.

Life took on a different rhythm in the timber camps. Gino Guarnieri was the cook and explained that his routine was to get up early, to make the lunch sandwiches for the wood cutters. Next, he would prepare an English breakfast with porridge, bacon and eggs, bread and marmalade. Before the men arrived back at camp, Guarnieri would stoke the fires for hot water showers and prepare dinner. All food had to be paid for by the men and Guarnieri was in charge of purchasing food items, and notifying the group how much money needed to be paid for the food. He also

procured barrels of table wine to decant into bottles, a supply of fresh milk from a dairy farmer and arrangement for a bus to take the men into Peechelba every fortnight. In town, they were known as the '*Italian lumberjacks*'.

The Civil Aliens Corps employed refugees and domestic and international enemy aliens. Under the National Security (Aliens Service) Regulations, the 'aliens' could not be subject to enrolment in the Armed Forces or the Civil Constructional Corps, but they could make contributions to service of national importance of a non-combatant nature. The procurement of firewood was one such priority. A report on the operations of the Allied Works Council in February 1945 reinforced the importance of the work done by those members of the CAC. It was reported that, *The acute shortage of firewood for domestic requirements in three states was largely solved by the Civil Aliens Corps. In two years and eight months the production to their credit is nearly 1,000,000 tons.*¹²³

The *Dunera* Italians were not the only group called upon to work in the CAC.

At the time of the disbandment of the CAC in July 1945, it was noted that 5000 aliens of seven nationalities had provided invaluable work on projects of national importance.

123 Allied Works Council - Report of activities July 1943 - February 1945, 1943-1945, NAA:A659, 1945/1/3162, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Reflection on four years of internment

Ivaldo Antinori from Scotland provides a thought-provoking insight into his attitude to four years of internment. He had been arrested on 10 June 1940 and on 9 June 1944 he wrote a letter to his parents:

*Some of the letters I receive from Ma make me rather anxious. She is allowing bitterness to get too much of an upper hand. I know as much as anyone else, what it is to be bitter and, although in an internment camp, I have had my battles, and they have been horribly too. It took me nearly three years to realise that, whatever injustices was perpetrated by other people, I could not get free of my greatest enemy, myself. To preserve my sanity, I had to find some solution to the problem. I formed some sort of philosophy, which gave a meaning to life. But I formed it in the manner of a sculptor who fashions his block of marble, only by shattering it. I hope that Ma will be able to go through this phase, speedier and easier than I did...*¹²⁴

Antinori's father, Francesco was a Glaswegian restaurateur and had been interned from 28 October 1940 to 30 May 1941 on the Isle of Man. Ivaldo Antinori returned to Liverpool, England on 2 August 1945, re-interned on the Isle of Man before being released from internment as a special case on 24 August 1945.

Rando Bertoia, also from Scotland provides a stoic reflection on his internment. He reflected, *While the terrible experience of the Arandora Star will remain in my memory forever, the harrowing journey to Australia on the Dunera will be the period of my internment I will never forget...In the sordid surroundings on the Dunera, being a thinker and noting that my fellow internees continued to vent their wrath on the British for their sufferings, my private thoughts and sentiments descended instead elsewhere – on the two sinister individuals [Hitler and Mussolini] who by their crafty machinations, deliberately created, engineered and set in motion the catastrophe that befell humanity.*¹²⁵ Bertoia was 19 years old when he survived the sinking of the *Arandora Star* and celebrated his 20th birthday on the *Dunera*. Later in life, Bertoia became a campaigner to ensure that that the tragedy of the sinking of the *Arandora Star* was not forgotten.

124 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 4.

125 Bertoia, "Appendix Internment Testimonies," 234.

Release to Private Employment

Those who were medically unfit for lumberjack work had work placements arranged in the men's relevant trades. Santo Albericci, a waiter was sent to *Scott's Hotel* Collins Street, Melbourne. Other employers were the Commercial Travellers Association – Francesco Capra, Lodovico Rosi and Luigi Vergano; Blue Room Café Toorak – Eusebio Bravo; Latin Café – Giuseppe Moruzzi and Pietro Moccogni; Loreto College – Caio Bruni and Antonio D'Agostino; and The Melbourne Club - Giuseppe Roscelli, Giuseppe Pelosi, Giuseppe Zaninetta and Pietro Cabrelli. Mr T Farrell at Kingsley Flats, Hawthorne employed Luigi Barbieri, Enrico Casci, Giuseppe Consoli, Ernesto Cordani, Francesco Mazzina and Corinto Pardini. Alberto Maciocia, a mechanic, had a job arranged for him at Melford Motors in Melbourne. A mosaic and terrazzo business De Marco Bros. Melbourne employed Antonio Alonzi, Aracangelo Andreucci, Sisto Ferrarin, Emilio Galante, Luigi Minchella and Lorenzo Rosselli.

Working and living in Melbourne opened a world of opportunities to the men, from going to the cinemas to having a new suit made. Small bonuses such as writing letters which were no longer censored, the freedom of movement and meeting friends could also be enjoyed.

Release to Melbourne

A small group of men were released to Melbourne on their own recognisance. Some like Carlo Notarianni and Carlo Martinez did not get medical clearances for work with the Civil Aliens Corps. Others were men of independent means able to provide for themselves. In this group were Vittorio Di Rollo, Giuseppe Martinez, Carlo Notarianni, Umberto Scaravelli and Dr Gerolamo Manzocchi. If required, they had the assistance of Mr Vaccari to register with the Department of Labour and find suitable accommodation. Mr Vaccari represented the Italian UK internees on parole as a liaison officer, networking between the Italian community in Melbourne and various Commonwealth Departments.

Nicola Cua remembered that those on parole release were referred to accommodation places such as the Victoria Palace. These were Victorian era boarding houses and Dante Schiavi and Giuseppe Rossi had their address registered as Gladstone Palace on their Civil Aliens Corps Form.

Ninety four was a year of change. One hundred and four UK Italians had been released from internment in Australia, leaving 30 remaining behind the barbed wire. Romolo Chioconi, due to ongoing medical treatment spent 1944 at the 28 Australian Camp Hospital, Waranga.

Release to the UK

During 1944 no *Dunera* Italians returned to the United Kingdom. On 6 February 1945, a group of 63 'released internees' boarded the *SS Athlone Castle* in Sydney arriving in Liverpool, England on 29 March 1945.

This was followed by another 21 returning to England of the *Dominion Monarch* on 19 April 1945. Dr Manzocchi departed on the *SS Nestor* on his own account arriving in Liverpool, England on 18 May 1945.

On 2 August 1945, six *Dunera* Italians arrived at Liverpool on the *Dominion Monarch*. Their address was listed as c/- The Home Office London. All six would continue their internment until decisions were made for their individual case. Ivaldo Antinori, Renzo Mazzolini and Francesco Apicella were released in the United Kingdom.

Giorgio Boggio, Annibale Pieroni and Giulio Gamberini however were repatriated to Italy on 12 November 1945.

One Australian document for Boggio reported that the reason for his delay in release might be due to information contained in his British file. Brigadier Sir David Petrie, Director General of MI5, London wrote to Brigadier W.B. Simpson, Director General of Security, Canberra in regards to Boggio. Boggio had returned to England on 2 August 1945 and the letter from Petrie was dated 7 August 1945. Brigadier Petrie documented, *All available evidence indicates that Boggio has been strongly Fascist and unco-operative and we have therefore recommended that he be repatriated in due course to Italy.*¹²⁶

A group of ten departed Australia on the *Nieuw Amsterdam* on 7 July 195 followed by nine onboard the *SS Mauretania* which arrived in Liverpool, England on 23 September 1945.

When twelve Italians disembarked the *Athlone Castle* in Southampton, England on 28 February 1946, only Romolo Chioconi remained in Australia awaiting return to the UK.

125 NAA:A11797, WP6009.

Trauma

The Italians could not but be affected by their internment experiences. Surviving the sinking of the *SS Arandora Star* and the 55-day inhumane treatment on the *HMT Dunera* were defining experiences in their lives. The question of 'how long are we to be interned' which could never be answered, also contributed to a sense of hopelessness and anxiety.

Individual men were dealt a cruel hand by fate, and suffered extreme personal tragedy and emotional pain. Primo Pinagli, an English café proprietor, received news of the death of his son, Pietro who was 18 months old in the bombing of London during April 1941. Giuseppe Rossi, a Welsh café owner, held his brother Luigi afloat for nine hours after the sinking of the *Arandora Star* but on rescue, Luigi had passed away. Air raids on London claimed the life of Libero Roveta's father, Federico in April 1941. While the birth of your first child should be a moment of joy, Leandro Strola was interned at the time. Strola arrived at Southampton on the *SS Athlone Castle* on 29 March 1945; his daughter was 4 years old. Another expectant father was Luigi Poggioli whose first child was born while he was interned. While interned as an 'enemy alien' Arcangelo Andreucci's son was fighting with the British Army in North Africa, was captured and taken as a prisoner of war to Italy.

Those who committed their thoughts to paper expressed apathy, fear and outrage. Giovanni Osmetti, a bank clerk wrote to his wife Anna on 10 May 1944 ... *after four years of internment I have become so apathetic that I do not mind whether I wait here in the camp or outside for the ship that will finally carry me home.*¹²⁷ Osmetti revealed in a subsequent letter to Anna, after he received news that he was to be released to Melbourne, that he felt frightened.

Carlo Barsotti articulated to his wife his feelings: *I pray every day that they will punish delinquent Fascists, not only those in Italy but also in Glasgow, who used to cry always 'Long Live Fascism', as there are also among us those delinquent Fascists who are a gang of ruffians about 20 men...If I were in command, I would shoot the lot and I hope that the commandant here knows them.*¹²⁸ The strong-arm fascists in the camp caused mental trauma to many of the Italians.

Dr Gaetano Zezi only told his wife about his fear in a letter dated 2 August 1943 after Mussolini had been arrested. He explained: *Lately the news about my country has saddened me. Although I did not approve of anything that has been done there in the last eight or ten years by the powers that be, and disapprove of their subservience to analogous foreign self-constituted authorities, it still remains my country and it hurts to see it in the dust. Every time I came in contact with compatriots, in the last eight years, I tried to warn them about dangers,...For one thing I would never have led my country in this appalling mess and I would have measured less extravagantly my friend, more cautiously my foe. He in*

127 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 4.

128 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 3.

*the camp Madam, for three years I have been fighting the same appalling ignorance and truculence. Never have I mentioned to you this side of my nightmare. It might have ended very dangerously. My friend Borghi was the only man who stood steadfastly by me, through thick and thin against a gang of bullies and their ever-hiding chieftains. Sometimes it was touch and go...but we never gave in, because we were protecting a bunch of helpless old people and perplexed youths.*¹²⁹

Giuseppe Ferrari was confronted with a different hell when he arrived at Tatura Camp 2 after four months at Loveday Camp 14D. His greatest tragedy was the fall of fascism in Italy and being in a camp with men he loathed. He wrote to his wife on 4 August 1944, *When I first landed at Camp 2, I was under the impression of having landed on a rubbish heap, such was the quality of people around me, rotten to the core. Never mind, it will soon be over or at least decided then I shall be able to live apart from them all and forget the greatest tragedy of my life.*¹³⁰ The reality of shattered dreams makes men embittered.

Colonel Borghi, leader of the Italian UK internees, was to suffer mentally and physically in the first three years of internment. During 1940-1941 he suffered a breakdown and was diagnosed with heart problems. On 14 September 1941 he composed these words to his wife, *..life in camp [is] slowly sapping my moral and physical vitality and I don't wish to become a wreck by the time the war will be finished and then two years later he penned: I have had more pain and sorrow in these three years than in my life.*¹³¹ In his role as camp leader, he was protector of the vulnerable, responsible for the daily welfare of 200 men and the efficient running of the camp, a mentor, moderator and motivator.

129 NAA:A367 C75321.

130 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 4.

131 NAA:A367 C75811.

Lest we forget

The sad reality of war is the loss of life. Five men died in Australian hospitals and six men died at sea. *The Ossario* in Murchison, Victoria is now the final and peaceful resting place for Pietro Moscardini, Pasquale Pacitti, Michele Fagiano, Pietro Lucchesi and Giulio Felloni. Initially buried in local cemeteries, in 1961 the men's remains were exhumed and re-interred at *The Ossario*. These men are far from home, but they are not forgotten. Each year in November a special commemoration service is held at *The Ossario* for the 130 Italian internees and prisoners of war who died in Australia during World War 2.

Pietro Moscardini died at Barmera Hospital, South Australia on 18 January 1942. He was born on 6 January 1905 in Barga Italy. He and his wife Lina lived in Glasgow. He stated his occupation as shop keeper.

Pasquale Pacitti died at the Loveday Camp Hospital, South Australia on 6 June 1942. He was born on 5 July 1889 at Cerasuolo Italy. He and his wife Clementine lived at Westbourne Park, London. He stated his occupation as a terrazzo worker and biscuit maker.

Michele Fagiano died at 28 Australian Camp Hospital, Waranga, Victoria on 29 January 1943. He was born on 26 June 1880 in Cherasco Italy. He lived with his wife Violet Alice at Upper Marsh, London. He worked as a head waiter and had two children: Michele and John.

Pietro Lucchesi died on 25 June 1943 at the 28 Australia Camp Hospital, Waranga, Victoria. He was born on 13 October 1907 at Bagni di Lucca Italy. He worked as a Commercial Traveller and lived in Birmingham. He listed his mother Agria, as his next of kin.

Giulio Felloni died at 28 Australia Camp Hospital, Waranga, Victoria on 8 June 1944. He was born on 25 May 1900 in Villa Felloni Parma. He worked as a marble worker in Glasgow and listed his mother, Rosa as his next of kin. He shared his internment journey with his younger brother Adolfo. After surviving the sinking of the *Arandora Star*, Giulio's death was a cruel blow for Adolfo.

At the Tatura Irrigation and Internment Camps Museum there is a contemporary sculpture and plaque in memory of those internees who lost their lives on the *SS Arandora Star*, the *MV Abosso* and the *SS Waroonga*. Both *Dunera* Italian and German internees died enroute to England onboard the *MV Abosso* and the *SS Waroonga*.^{xxxv}

The sculpture is a re-creation of the original *Arandora Star* memorial. The original memorial at Tatura Camp 3C was sculpted by Robert Felix Emil Braun and dedicated on 2 July 1941, on the first anniversary of the sinking of the *SS Arandora Star*.^{xxxvi}

The MV *Abosso* sank on 29 October 1942. Seven Italian internees were aboard the ship when she was hit by torpedo. Ugo Achille Bonelli was the only Italian survivor. All were returning to the UK to appear before the *Italian Advisory Committee*.

Orlando Ugolini was concerned about the dangers of shipping and wrote his last will and testament before his departure from Loveday Camp 10, leaving the document with the camp leader. A shop keeper from Uphall, Scotland, he was born on 20 November 1894 in Vinchiana Lucca, Italy. The beneficiary of his will was his wife Duse.

Riccardo Massarelli, an accountant, was born in Pisa, Italy on 2 April 1882 and lived with his wife Muriel in Cricklewood, London. A letter dated 2 June 1942 notified him that he would not be allowed to return to UK. This decision was reversed by a 15 June 1942 letter which gave Massarelli permission to return to UK to appear before the *Italian Advisory Committee*.

Colombo Riani was born on 26 May 1889 in Castlenuovo Garfagnana, Italy. On his Australian records, he lists his occupation as musician, for he was a trombone player of repute having played in the Opera House of Florence. Other documents have him as owner of a Café and Ice Cream Palour in Houghton Le Spring. His wife Nelide had a premonition about her husband's death: *A family story states that Nelide had a nightmare, she saw her husband in the water calling her name; she woke up screaming, frightening everyone, and then they found out Columbo had died at sea.*¹³²

Louis [Luigi] Jaconelli was born in Paris, France on 6 March 1912 and was a Ladies' Hairdresser. He lived in Glasgow with his wife, Eliza.

Crescenzo Divito was born in Casalattico Frosinone, Italy on 1 June 1895 and was living in Inverkeithing, Scotland when he was interned. He owned a restaurant/refreshment bar with his wife, Maria.

Guido Gonnella was born in Barga, Italy on 24 October 1905. He worked in London as a restaurant waiter and lived with his wife Catherine and five children at Copenhage(n) Street London.

All eleven men had survived the sinking of the *SS Arandora Star* and the near miss torpedos on the *HMT Dunera*. It is a tragedy that they would not return to their homes and families.

¹³² "Riani's Gaiety Temperance Bar and Ice Cream Palour," Houghton Le Spring Heritage Society, January 26, 2013, http://houghtonlespring.org.uk/articles/riani_icecream.htm.

Restoration

Release on parole offered many Italians opportunities to take control of their circumstances. For four to five years, the men had little control over the decisions made, regarding their lives and movements. But once released on parole, some men capably made decisions about their remaining time in Australia. Others independently applied for jobs. While the authorities were making decisions in 1944 for most men regarding employment, other men took a more independent approach to their release on parole.

Nicola Cua had been approved for work in the Civil Aliens Corps but had his placement delayed. It was essential for Cua to make decisions for him and his father who was still awaiting release, so he stayed voluntarily in internment for an additional month. Once Giovanni Cua received his release on parole, Nicola found work for his father at an orphanage, where Giovanni was in charge of the breakfast and dinner services and had accommodation. Nicola Cua failed his medical for the Civil Aliens Corps, so found work at the Alexander Hotel in Melbourne as a dish washer. After a day of washing dishes he approached the manageress, Miss Foley and asked if he could be a waiter. He was given a week's trial and remained in that position until his embarkation on 28 February 1946 on the *SS Athlone Castle*. Cua found a room for rent with an attached kitchen and another room for separate rent. Not willing to share this space, he rented the second room. After four years of communal living, privacy was paramount for Cua.

Rando Bertoia's 'release on parole' was arranged for him. He was employed by the Civil Aliens Corps with the Forest Commission cutting timber. Bertoia used work in the CAC as a steppingstone. On a day off, he went to Melbourne: *I found employment in my old trade as a terrazzo worker... A man from my area of Italy gave me a job. Terrazzo and mosaic workers were all from my region of Italy: Friuli. I had a girlfriend in Melbourne who worked in an ice cream shop... she was from my part of Italy.*¹³³ After four and a half years, Bertoia was able to work in his trade, reconnect with his heritage and be a young man with freedoms.

The opportunity to enjoy normal interactions with people in Australia was restorative. Giovanni Baldelli was a school master and a social anarchist. In camp, he enjoyed teaching languages, writing essays, poems and plays and engaging in conversations of an academic or intellectual nature. He too worked for the Forest Commission but wrote to Dino Accini who was still in Tatura Camp about his wonderful experiences with local Australians. Baldelli explained, *The other day I was taken by car to Wangaratta where they were holding a discussion in English on the Italian people and their conditions under the fascist regime. There were not many people there, but they were well chosen and intelligent. One of the listeners invited me to dinner at his home the next day together with Pietro Beschizza. There we found ourselves for the first time in a*

¹³³ Bertoia, "Appendix Internment Testimonies," 233.

*warm family atmosphere engendered by the kindness and charming simplicity of the wife and by the Italian music...*¹³⁴

Giuseppe Achille Belloni was medically unfit for manual work but was keen to be released on parole, while awaiting return to the UK. He was self-starting in applying for jobs suitable to his interests and experience as a provisions merchant and restaurant owner. He received a job offer from Mr Clifton of Griffiths Viticultural Nursery as a vineyard hand at a basic wage, but he also applied to the Managing Director of Paramount Pictures in Sydney outlining his experience, stating, *...I can speak fluently French, German, Spanish and Italian and have a good knowledge of Portuguese and Romanian. I had three restaurants in London and one in Italy plus my wine and provision business. If perchance in your chains of cinemas you have a restaurant, tea lounge or bar of cafeterias, I feel I could be very useful...*¹³⁵ On 16 November 1944 Belloni was released to Sydney for work at a theatre company in Brisbane Street, Sydney. Rather than waiting for a job placement to be found for him, Belloni took the situation into his own hands, in securing employment in an industry familiar and suitable to him.

Lodovico Bertorelli was released on 7 September 1944, to his sister-in-law Mrs Pagluicci in Palmer Street, Sydney. At 62 years old, it would be preferable for him to be with family rather than living in a Melbourne boarding house or remaining in camp.

Chefs Ugolino Giovine and Bartolomeo Calderoni and maître d'hôtel Ermenegildo Guido returned to their professions with employment at the Menzies Hotel, Melbourne. All three were Londoners: Giovine had worked as head chef of St Ermin's, Bartolomeo Calderoni was a well-respected chef of Quaglino's, creating dishes for European royalty and Ermenegildo Guido was assistant manager at Claridge's Restaurant. They were joined by Scottish restaurant owner Carlo Barsotti, Welsh café proprietor Luigi Fulgoni, London head waiter of the Savoy, Arturo Nazzari and Welsh café manager, Marco Gazzi. The Menzies Hotel, which had been in dire need of experienced staff, would take on an international flavour during those last years of WW2.

134 NAA: A36, C74676.

135 NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 4.

'Stay-At-Home Disease'

Tatura Camp 2 Commandant used the term 'stay-at-home disease' for those internees who refused to leave internment. On the one hand, internees complained about their imprisonment behind the barbed wire fence, and then when they were offered 'release on parole' they refused freedom.

Life behind the barbed wire came with free accommodation, meals and medical treatment. Freedom came with financial responsibilities and decision making.

Giuseppe Ferrari was caught between the two worlds. His letter to his son on 4 August 1944 explained his dilemma. He wrote, *I told you of my impending release here in Australia but as you will understand... I must frankly admit that I don't know if I shall make up my mind to go out to work in comparative freedom; from what I can gather from other people the condition of work and remuneration are below standard and one has to think twice before taking such a step in a strange country... for the time I intend to remain interned and make sure of three meals a day and free medical treatment.*¹³⁶ It is fair to say that working for the Civil Aliens Corps meant living in a forestry camp of rather primitive conditions and being paid 'piece work'. Those Italians already working there wrote letters to their friends behind the barbed wire. Eventually, Ferrari was released to work on 25 January 1945 at Dookie Agricultural College where seven other UK Italians were already working. He did not have to wait long to return to England. On 29 March 1945, Ferrari arrived at Southampton.

In June 1944, six men withdrew their application for work with the Civil Aliens Corps some preferring to stay in camp and others wishing to find more suitable work. Two men Antonio Cavanna and Adolfo Coltelli, both 56 years old, had secured work by October 1944: Cavanna with The Cheese Company, North Melbourne and Coltelli at Hoddle Café Collins Street, Melbourne. The other four: Sisto Beschizza, Ivaldo Antinori, Giuseppe Lusardi and Cesare Casali remained in Tatura Camp until departure to England. Ivaldo Antinori, a violin player, excused himself on the grounds that he could not afford the risk of damage to his hands while wood cutting.

Vito Gallinari was entitled to 'stay-at-home'. In 1944 he was 71 years old. Gallinari had been approved by the Mixed Medical Commission for repatriation to Italy on grounds of ill health but he refused, as his wish was to return to England where he had lived since 1896. On 19 April 1945, Gallinari disembarked the *Dominion Monarch* at Liverpool, England as a released internee and returned to his family.

In total, there were 26 Italian internees who remained in camp. There were those who were refused release on security grounds and there was a small group of men due to medical reasons, age or lack of financial independence who stayed in camp. There was also a group of men who were either allowed release but chose to stay in

¹³⁶ NAA: MP70/1, 37/101/185 Tatura Part 4.

camp or simply chose to stay in camp believing that they might miss passage home to the UK if they were 'out' working.

Romolo Chioconni was the last Italian UK internee to be released from camp. Chioconni was not in good health and had a series of hospital admissions: Mooroopna Hospital, 115 Heidelberg Military Hospital, and the 28 Australian Camp Hospital Waranga. He spent three years from April 1943 until 18 April 1946 at the 28 Australian Camp Hospital Waranga isolation ward suffering from pulmonary TB.

As the last remaining UK Italian internee on the books at Tatura Camp 2 when it closed, Chioconni was transferred in absentia to Tatura Camp 1 on 21 July 1945; at the time he was in hospital. On 9 August 1946 he was released to Melbourne to await passage home to Scotland. He was required to complete a *Questionnaire Overseas Internees*. To the question 'What are your intentions?' he stated, *I would like to go back to Scotland, as I have not seen my peoples since 1940. I wish to point out that I am the only one left of my group who is still interned.*¹³⁷ No response was forthcoming.

Chioconni re-iterated his position in a letter to the authorities on 19 November 1946; *I am very much surprise in not receiving your letter regarding repatriation. I have repeatedly said that I didn't want to remain in Australia ... I desire to be sent back to the U.K. as soon as possible. I would very much oblige if you would make present to the Authorities of my three years in Waranga Hospital, so that they may all at [allocate me] me a berth where I may have plenty of fresh air. With the hope of a favourable reply, I thank you.*¹³⁸

The last document in Chioconni's file is a letter from the Secretary, Overseas Internees Investigation Commission on 4 December 1946. Finally, he boarded the *Asturias* in Melbourne on 3 July 1947. Chioconni arrived at Southampton on 31 July 1947; his internment journey was over.

137 Chioconni Romolo, 1940-1946, NAA:A367, C74735, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

138 Chioconni, Romilo (Romolo) born 1906, Beverino Italy - Italian - E25046/E35046 [personal file of internee from Camp 1 (Tatura)], 1942-1946, NAA:B1356, Camp1/CHIOCCONI ROMILO, National Archives of Australia, Melbourne.

The Demographics

The *Dunera* Italians were a mixed group of men from all walks of life and a study of the demographics for this group, highlight the diversity within the cohort. There was no typical Category A Italian internee just as there was a range in political leanings from 'pro-British' to 'a true Italian concerned for his country' to 'rabid fascist'.

The age difference within the group was 49 years. At the time of arrival in Australia, Pietro Beschizza was 18 years old, and Vito Gallinari was 67 years old. The majority group of men were in their 40s followed by those in their 30s. Beschizza was a constant worker in the kitchen and Gallinari was friendly with most men in the camp, and was looked upon as the grandfather of the group. There were: four men born in the 1870s; 38 men born from 1880-1889; 72 born from 1890-1899; 55 were born from 1900-1909; 27 born from 1910-1919 and four born 1920 – 1922.

The place of residence and place of birth of the *Dunera* Italians reflects the migration patterns of Italians in general. Not all the men were born in Italy. Alessandro Pacitti was born in St Petersburg, Russia, while Louis Jaconelli was born in Paris, France. Bartolomeo Calderoni and Luigi Cappuccini were born in Montevideo, Uruguay. Enrico Casci and Michele Coia were born in Scotland, with Rizzieri Ferrucci and Francesco Amato born in England. Lino Servini was born in Wales and Renzo Mazzolini was born in Germany.

Sixty two and a half percent of the group were resident in England, with 26.5 percent living in Scotland and 11 percent in Wales. Some settlement patterns in the UK can be noted; 73 percent of the Welsh group were born in Bardi (Parma) Italy.

Twenty-three men were married to women who were British with three wives noted as being British born. Decio Rossi's wife was American and Angelo Sterlini's wife was French. Ten fathers had sons serving in the British armed forces. There were eight sets of brothers in the *Dunera* Italian group: Santo and Angelo Albericci, Giulio and Adolfo Felloni, Pietro and Giovanni Moccogni, Mario and Bartolomeo Rabaiotti, Celeste and Lino Servini, Giuseppe and Paolo Belloni; Emilio and Antonio Galante; and Osvaldo and Giovanni Tome. There were two sets of father and son: Nicola Cua and his father Giovanni, and Carlo Martinez and his father Giuseppe. Giovanni Cua arrived at Southampton on his 61st birthday and Giuseppe Martinez celebrated his 64th birthday at sea returning home.

Ties to Italy remained close. Twenty three percent of the group registered their next of kin as living in Italy, with Rizzieri Ferrucci listing his mother, his next of kin, as living in France. Gabriele Cocozza had a young daughter stranded in Italy while Carlo Notarinni's teenage son was also caught in Italy.

An interesting situation was that of Angelo Biasoni. Both he and his wife Domenica were interned. While Angelo was interned in Australia, Domenica was interned at Rushen and Peveril Camps, Port Erin, Isle of Man.

Not all *Dunera* Italians were Catholic. Giovanni Baldelli lists 'Christian, not RC' as his religion on his form and Caio Bruni and Giorgio Scola list Protestant as their religion.

Italian migrants were multi-skilled known for their hard work and industry with diverse working careers. Umberto Scaravelli worked in the perfume industry in England and Italy, operated a Ladies' Hair Salon in London, on occasions was a ladies' hair stylist for Gaumont British Studios and Fox Film Corp. and performed opera in Italy and England. Caio Bruni had visited Australia in 1902 when he jumped ship in Newcastle, New South Wales. He worked on British ships for several years and was a rubber mixer at Pirelli in Southampton before internment. Manfredo Pini was an ice merchant at the time of his arrest but had also worked in the terrazzo and mosaics industry. Leandro Strola worked as a waiter in a French restaurant on board the *Majestic*, the flagship of the White Star Line on its transatlantic service, before opening a small restaurant in London. Ugo Ugolini had worked as a hairdresser, soldier, secretary and free-lance journalist. Francesco Capra began his working life as a waiter then bought residential properties which he and his wife ran as boarding houses.

This group of Italians highlights their mobility across the world. They did not simply leave Italy for the UK. Some men had gained valuable industry and language experience in Belgium, France, Germany and Switzerland and Romolo Chioconi had worked in Australia from 1926-1930. Each of the 200 men had interesting curricula vitae.

Their occupations are diverse ranging from button dye expert to bank clerk. Many men were engaged in the hospitality industry as café and restaurant owners, chefs, waiters and food suppliers with 53.5 percent employed in this sector. Shop keepers who were also ice cream vendors, tobacconists and general stores account for 15.5 percent of the men's occupations. Seven and a half percent of the men worked in the building industry as terrazzo, mosaic and concrete workers. Among the group were a Parisian dress designer, engineer, corporate manager, perfume agent and a journalist.

Interestingly are the photos which show the men in groups: the Welsh, the Scottish and the Londoners. The association to their place of residency in the United Kingdom remained strong.



Figure 5: The Welsh Italians: Tatura, Australia. January 1943. Group of Italian internees from overseas now interned at Tatura Internment Camp. Back row, left to right: F. Rabaiotti; M. Gazzzi; Giovanni Lusardi; A. Cavanna; Giuseppe Moruzzi; E. Cordani. Front row: L. Fulgoni; G. Rossi; Giuseppe Lusardi; F. Cavina.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Colin Thomas Halmarick, *Tatura, Australia, 1943*, Photograph. Australian War Memorial, Canberra. <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C347751>.



*Figure 6: The Scottish Italians. Tatura, Australia. January 1943. Group of Italian internees from overseas now interned at Tatura Internment Camp. Back row, left to right: A. Pacitti; V. Bechelli; R. Ciuffardi; R. Mazzolini; C. Pardini; G. Biagioni. Front row: G. Orlandi; C. Barsotti; M. Croci; L. Minchella.*¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ Colin Thomas Halmarick, *Tatura, Australia, 1943*, Photograph. Australian War Memorial, Canberra. <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C347747>.



*Figure 7: The London Italians. Tatura, Australia. January 1943. Group of Italian internees from overseas now interned at Tatura Internment Camp. Back row, left to right: G. Galbiati; U. Giovine; G. Berni; P. Beschizza; N. Cua; F. Amato. Front row: G. Cua; E. Simonelli; G. Guarnieri; P. Tolaini.*¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Colin Thomas Halmarick, *Tatura, Australia, 1943*. Photograph. Australian War Memorial, Canberra. <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C347752>.

The Long Road Home

Returning home was dependent upon clearance by the Home Office in London, which outlined the conditions under which they returned and shipping availability. Major Julian Layton, Home Office representative in Australia was involved in informing the *Dunera* internees about the course of action to take to be granted permission to return to UK. As liaison officer between the internees and the Home Office, he would inform the men if their applications to return to UK was approved or denied.

As the months progressed, the Italians had an alternative option to depart Australia. They could apply to the *Mixed Medical Commission* for repatriation to Italy on the grounds of ill health. For those who had family in Italy and did not necessarily have any ties to the UK and/or those who were ardent fascists saw this as a road to freedom. It was ironic that men who never had a sick day whilst in Australia were approved for repatriation to Italy, on medical grounds. As the war progressed, these men withdraw their applications for various reasons. Not one man mentioned the reversal of fortunes for Italy.

One disincentive to seek permission to return to the UK was the threat to shipping. The men had survived the sinking of the *SS Arandora Star* and had a lucky escape on the *HMT Dunera*. The risk of a ship being struck by a torpedo was real. While Giovanni Biagioni was approved for return to UK on 20 December 1941, he remained in Australia until February 1945. Realdo Ciuffardi received his approval on 16 April 1942 but did not depart Australia until the end of 1943. As news filtered through to them that the *MV Abosso* and the *SS Waroonga* had been torpedoed with the loss of life for six Italians, some Italians withdrew their *Certificate of Willingness to Travel* or didn't pursue permission to return to UK for further investigation.

The *MV Abosso* had carried 43 internees. The seven Italian internees were released to UK to appear before the *Advisory Committee*, the other 36 were German internees. Ugo Bonelli was the only internee survivor of the *MV Abosso* tragedy. The internees boarded the *Westernland* in Sydney, New South Wales and changed ships at Cape Town, South Africa on 10 October 1942. The *MV Abosso* was hit by torpedoes on 29 October 1942 and Bonelli's records give 2 November 1942 as the date of his rescue by the *HMS Bideford*, which took him to Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

The *SS Waroonga* sailed from Sydney for Liverpool via Panama and New York with eleven internees. The ship was torpedoed on 4 April 1943 and the survivors were transferred to the *SS Joel AR Poinsett* and arrived in Londonderry on 9 April 1943. The three Italians, Giovanni Gazzano, Giuseppe Crolla and Alessandro Pacitti were returning to appear before the *Advisory Committee*. All three survived. Eight German internees were onboard but only Jakob Steinhof and Stefan Vajda survived.

<i>Ship</i>	<i>Embarkation Date</i>	<i>Numbers</i>
<i>HMT Largs Bay</i>	4.6.41	1
<i>Stirling Castle</i>	13.10.41	10
<i>Rangitiki</i>	20.11.41	2
<i>HMT Largs Bay</i>	12.12.41	1
<i>Themistocles</i>	17.7.42	17
<i>Westernland- Abosso – HMS Bideford</i>	23.7.42 ¹⁴²	7
<i>Desirade – SS Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt</i>	Late Oct 42	6
<i>SS Waroonga - SS Joel AR Poinsett</i>	29.1.43	3
<i>Themistocles</i>	2.12.43	13
<i>Athlone Castle</i>	6.2.45	63
<i>Dominion Monarch</i>	4.3.45	21
<i>SS Nestor</i>	April 45	1
<i>Dominion Monarch</i>	1.7.45	6
<i>Nieuw Amsterdam</i>	7.7.45	10
<i>Mauretania</i>	22.8.45	9
<i>Athlone Castle</i>	23.1.46	12
<i>Asturias</i>	3.7.47	1

Figure 8: Ships Australia to UK carrying the ‘Dunera’ Italians

Internees on the second *SS Themistocles* voyage sailed the long way home. The ship departed Australia late November 1943 and sailed via Wellington NZ, Panama, Jamaica and New York, arriving in Cardiff, Wales on 14 February 1944.

It would be close to seven years from the Italians arrival in Australia on 3 September 1940 to the last departure in 1947. The first to be released was Guglielmo Francescon who departed Tatura Camp for Sydney, NSW on 25 May 1941. He boarded the *HMT Largs Bay* on 4 June 1941 and arrived in the UK on 31 July 1941. He was reinterned on the Isle of Man and on 23 October 1941, he regained his freedom without restrictions under Category 22. Romolo Chioconni was released to Melbourne from Tatura Camp 1 on 9 August 1946 and seemingly forgotten by the authorities. In a letter dated 19 November 1946, he wrote, *I have repeatedly said that I didn't want to remain in Australia. I desire to be sent back to the U.K. as soon as possible and if you remember I should have sailed for the U.K. on the 1st June 1945 . At the time I was ill in Waranga Hospital.*¹⁴³ Chioconni arrived at Southampton on the *Asturias* on 31 July 1947.

¹⁴² Adjutant General 6 (b) Internees, Adjutant General 13 (a) Prisoners of War, January – April 1944, AWM52 Australian Military Forces, Army headquarters, formation and unit diaries, 1939-1945, AWM52 1/1/13/5, Australian War Memorial, 90.

¹⁴³ NAA:B1356, Camp1/CHIOCCONI ROMILO.

Australia or UK

For some of the Italians, Australia was a land of opportunity.

Giacomo Barovero worked as a wine butler when he was arrested on 11 June 1940. He was released for work with the Civil Aliens Corps on 16 May 1944, then in 1946 Barovero made his application for naturalisation. Jimmy Barovero, an Italian chef with a 'big reputation,' was employed in December 1949, by brothers Maurice and George Johnson of the Oxford Hotel, Swanston Street, Melbourne. One of Barovero's signature dishes was Jimmy's Cream of Seafood Soup. His wife, Luigia was living in Italy when Barovero was interned, and it appears that she came to Australia in 1948. Barovero was listed as living at 135 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy, Victoria on the 1954 Electoral Rolls. Australian records indicate that Giacomo and Luigia Barovero departed Australia c. 1956.

In England, Ettore Bianchi had worked as a waiter and lived at the Majestic Gardens and Hotel, Folkstone, England in 1939. After signing on to work with the Civil Aliens Corps, he was classed as medically unfit for forestry work. It would seem that he was reassigned to work in hospitality. On 9 September 1946 Bianchi was granted his *Certificate of Naturalisation* and his address was Romano's Restaurant, Sydney. Ettore Giuseppe Mario, known as John died in Griffith, New South Wales in 1980.

Giuseppe Rossi was a cafe proprietor in Swansea, Wales when he was arrested and interned. He was released from Tatura Camp on 16 May 1944 for employment with the Civil Aliens Corps. In 1946 Giuseppe Rossi married Ivana Josephine Padovan in Melbourne. Known as Joe, he was a friend to Marco Gazzi. Both he and Marco Gazzi were awarded the *Cavaliere al Merito della Repubblica Italiana* on 16 June 1990.

Friendships formed during internment continued into civilian life with men reuniting at weddings, working in the same establishments and staying in contact with those who returned to the UK.

Angelo Benedetto Mario 'Peter' Ghisoni was released to the Civil Aliens Corps on 16 May 1944. On 12 November 1947, he advertised his intention to apply for naturalisation and was granted his *Certificate of Naturalisation* on 4 June 1948. On 7 May 1949 Peter Ghisoni formerly of Regent's Park, London was married to Maria Teresa Bogetti in Chiltern, Victoria. The best man was Frank Ferrucci of London (aka Rizzieri Ferrucci) and guests included Nazzari (Arturo) and Previdi (Emilio) of London. Ghisoni worked as a market gardener in the Chiltern Valley.

Rizzieri Ruggiero Alphonso Ferrucci was born in Maidenhead, England and held dual nationality until before the war when a valid declaration of alienage was made; and he forfeited his British nationality. He was released from internment to Melbourne in April 1945. In 1948 he married Marie Claire Chapman and they settled in Sydney. Mrs P Ghisoni of Chiltern Valley was a guest at the wedding. Ferrucci and his wife lived at Cambridge Street, Penhurst, New South Wales and on 13

September 1949 Ferrucci obtained his *Certificate of Naturalisation*. He was head waiter at Romano's Castlereagh Street, Sydney and by 1963 he was on the Electoral Roll as Richard Roger Frank Ferrucci.

Giuseppe Vincenzo Lembo was released to the Civil Aliens Corps on 27 June 1944. He had been Tatura Camp 2A camp leader since the departure of Colonel Borghi in December 1943. On 9 September 1946 he advertised in the newspapers his intention to apply for naturalisation. Lembo's *Certificate of Naturalisation* was awarded on 24 January 1947 and at the time he was living at 346 Victoria Street, North Melbourne. Journalist Rita di Lieto provided the following details about Lembo's time in Australia. She reported, *In Melbourne he [Lembo] opened a travel and trade agency: G.V.Lembo Travel & Commerce Agencies, representing in the immediate post-war period. He represented the TAA (Trans Australia Airlines), and the shipping companies that brought thousands of emigrants from Italy to Australia: the Flotta Lauro, the Lloyd Triestino, the Sitmar Line Migrant Ships and the Cogedar Line (Genoese Armament Company). He was also an agent for ICLE - (Istituto per il Credito del Lavoro Italiano all'Estero), as well as the ANZ banks (Australian and New Zealand Banking) and the Saving Bank. Giuseppe Vincenzo Lembo was planning his definitive return to Italy when he died of a heart attack in Melbourne in 1962.*¹⁴⁴

Arturo Giuseppe Nazzari was released for employment at the Menzies Hotel, Melbourne on 31 August 1944. A head waiter from the Savoy Hotel, London, in April 1945 he was working as the head waiter at Café Florentino's, a Melbourne institution. He advertised in the newspaper on 21 May 1945, his intention to apply for naturalisation which was granted on 25 October 1946. His wife Dorina Nazzari (née Previdi) then joined him from London, England. Arturo Nazzari became licensee and manager of the Ritz Café, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. On 19 February 1951 he passed away suddenly in Sydney, New South Wales. Arturo Giuseppe Nazzari was a well-known identity in restaurant circles in Melbourne and was endearingly known as Joseph.

Marco Gazzi was a cafe assistant from Wales. Marco survived the sinking of the *Arandora Star*, but his brother Francesco perished. He was released from internment to industry as he did not gain medical clearance for heavy work with the Civil Aliens Corps. His work placement was at the Menzies Hotel. He married Flavia Fabbris and on 11 March 1948 he advertised his intention to apply for naturalisation. In 1948 he was working at Florentino's restaurant in Melbourne and he received his *Certificate of Naturalisation* on 4 June 1948. Gazzi owned and operated a successful butchery business. Both he and Giuseppe Rossi were awarded the *Cavaliere al Merito della Repubblica Italiana* on 16 June 1990.

Pietro Gallo was a man of means. He had worked as a personal servant to Denys Wilson, who died in WW1 and then worked as a personal assistant and secretary to

144 Rita di Lieto. "September 1940: the arrival in Australia of the Dunera with the survivors of the sinking of the *Arandora Star*," *Il Vescorodo*, September 7, 2022. <https://www.ilvescovado.it/it/storia-e-storie-19/settembre-1940-l-arrivo-in-australia-della-dunera-98329/article>.

Denys Wilson's mother, Mrs Ada Wilson. When Mrs Wilson died in 1933, Gallo inherited a property in Italy which received a considerable income and a yearly annuity of £2000 from the Woodgate Investment Trust. He himself had invested money wisely in property and shares. In April 1942, he requested permission to join a monastery, as living in noisily crowded barracks was a terrible strain on his nerves, and he stated that he was in a state of spiritual distress. On 24 August 1944 Gallo was released from internment to Sydney where he had arranged a job as a storeman at Austral Pressing Co. in Liverpool Road. Gallo was awarded his *Certificate of Naturalisation* on 23 July 1946. He applied as sponsor to Francesco 'Mario' Sarzotti's migration application in March 1946 and for Sarzotti to be employed as his secretary. They were known to each other in England, both having lived at the same residence in 1939 with Sarzotti mentioned as having been Gallo's valet and companion. Gallo lived at New South Head Road, Rose Bay, Sydney in 1954.

Giovanni Tome was a Scottish mosaic worker when arrested and interned. He was released for work with the Civil Aliens Corps on 16 May 1944. In 1945 he married Annie Madeline Parolo; her family was from the Owen's River District, Victoria. Giovanni Tome was living at Bundalong, Victoria when he was awarded his *Certificate of Naturalisation* on 14 April 1948.

Osvaldo Tome was the older brother of Giovanni Tome with whom he shared his internment journey. Also a mosaic worker, Osvaldo was released for work with the Civil Aliens Corps on 16 May 1944. In early February 1945 he was released for return to the UK and arrived on the *SS Athlone Castle* into Southampton, England on 29 March 1945. On 6 December 1953 Osvaldo returned to Australia on the *New Australia* with his wife, Lucy and daughter, Anne Marie. They lived in Sydney and Tome worked as a supervisor and in managerial roles.

Pacifico Vittorio Tolaini was a cafe owner in London when he was arrested and interned. Known as Vittorio, he was good friends with Nicola Cua and Luigi Beschizza. On 29 May 1944, he was released to employment at Dookie Agricultural College with Luigi Beschizza and Pietro Strina. Tolaini met Noemi Vendramini in Melbourne and they were married in 1945. On 11 August 1946, they departed Australia on the *Stirling Castle* sailing into Southampton, England. Along with his good friends Luigi Beschizza and Nicola Cua, he was awarded the *Cavaliere al Merito della Repubblica Italiana* on 16 June 1990. Tolaini published *Voyage of an Alien* in 1986 as his contribution to the historical record of the sinking of the *Arandora Star*, the *Dunera voyage* and Australian internment.

Luigi Beschizza was one of the youngest in the group being 22 years old when he was arrested. On 29 May 1944, he was released to work as a steward at Dookie Agricultural College. Beschizza then worked at the Latin Café, Mario's Café and a business operated by Silvio Ganora^{xxxvii} in Bourke Street, Melbourne. Beschizza and Ganora's youngest daughter Eva started dating but her father banned her from continuing the relationship. In defiance of her father's wishes, Eva and Luigi eloped to Sydney where Beschizza worked at Romano's Café. Ganora's efforts to have the

relationship severed led to Beschizza's case being published in Police Gazettes and his arrest pursued.

*Victoria, - Luigi BESCHIZZA, an alien of Italian nationality, who was supposed to have left the Commonwealth per the Athlone Castle on the 24th January, 1946. It has now been ascertained that he did not leave on that date, and has not notified his place of abode in accordance with National Security (Aliens control) Regulations. He is an ex-internee, having been sent to Australia from England for internment in 1940, and is in company of EVA GANORA aged 19 years, whose last known address was 575 Beach Road, Mord, Mordialloc. Beschizza is described as a waiter, 28 years, 5ft. 3 in., grey eyes, brown wavy hair, slim build, toothbrush moustache. He was formerly employed at the Café Latin, Exhibition Street, Melbourne.*¹⁴⁵

Eva and Luigi married on 22 May 1949 in Melbourne. The legal battle which ensued was character destroying for Beschizza. The Minister for Immigration, Mr Calwell, purported that Beschizza behaved like a fascist during his stay in Australia and that he was so obnoxious to the people of Britain that he was sent to Australia for internment. At the eleventh hour, the order for his deportation was halted on a *writ of habeas corpus* and Eva and Luigi embarked the *Orontes* for London on 24 August 1949. Defiant until the end Eva said, 'If Australia doesn't want my husband then it doesn't want me.'

Remaining in Australia was also contemplated by Giorgio Scola, Giorgio Boggio and Pietro Mariutto. In September 1944 Scola wrote to his mother, *I have been seriously considering the possibility of making my way out here in Australia after I am freed. I have learnt you can make quite a good living here and there are many opportunities and abundance of everything.*¹⁴⁶ Scola would return to England on 19 April 1945 and in 1990 he attended the 50th commemoration service for the tragedy of the *Arandora Star* and was awarded *Cavaliere al Merito dell Repubblica Italiana*. Giorgio Boggio had, before internment held visas to depart England and to enter Australia, as his plan was to continue tertiary studies in Australia. In 1945, Boggio then secured a proof reading position with a Catholic magazine, but he never received permission for release in Australia. Pietro Mariutto also saw life in Australia as an option. He wrote, *I am seriously contemplating the possibility of settling here in Australia after the war and my family would join me*¹⁴⁷ but Mariutto returned to England on 29 March 1945.

145 "Aliens." *The South Australia Police Gazette*, October 30 1946, 1, Ancestry.com.

146 NAA: A367, C74980, 1941-1944.

147 NAA:A367, C75221, 1943.

Legacy

The sinking of the *Arandora Star* was but one tragedy of World War 2. After internment, the men invested much energy to rebuild their lives. In the lead up to the 50th commemoration of the *Arandora Star* tragedy, there was a revival of interest for this history. This tragic event was important to many communities and families in Scotland, Wales, England, Australia and Italy. Residents in small coastal towns in Scotland and Ireland had buried the bodies of the victims as they arrived on their shores. Families across the United Kingdom and Italy grieved for the loss of their loved ones.

In Australia, the first *Arandora Star* memorial was constructed in Tatura Camp 3C in 1941. German internee Robert Braun created a beautiful monument in local stone to honour those who died in the *Arandora Star* tragedy. It was a feature in a garden bed and used as a backdrop for photographs. It was painted by Leonhard Adam in 1941 and his watercolour was used for a commission to sculpt a new memorial for the Tatura Wartime Camps Museum. This new memorial was unveiled on 7 May 2017 and also honours the Italian and German internees who died when the *MV Abosso* and *SS Waroonga* sank on their way to the UK.

In 1990 on the 50th anniversary of the *Arandora Star* tragedy, the remaining Italian survivors were decorated with the *Cavaliere al Merito dell Repubblica Italiana* by President Cossiga of Italy. The honour was bestowed upon: Angelo Albericci, Rando Bertoia, Luigi Beschizza, Pietro Beschizza, Enrico Casci, Attilio [Romolo] Chioconi, Gabriele Cocozza, Nicola Cua, Giuseppe Dora, Marco Gazzi, Gino Guarnieri, Fortunato Jannetta, Riccardo Lombardelli, Giovanni Moruzzi, Alessandro Pacitti, Elio Poli,^{xxxviii} Giuseppe Rossi, Libero Roveta, Giuseppe Salmi, Giorgio Enrico Scola, Lino Servini, and Vittorio Tolaini.^{xxxix} They were the custodians of the *Arandora Star* history.

The Italian internees had also made contributions by committing their memories of internment. The Imperial War Memorial historians interviewed Nicola Cua, Luigi Beschizza and Gino Guarnieri. The Warth Mills Project featured Nicola Cua, Luigi Beschizza, Gino Guarnieri and Rando Bertoia. In 1991, Nicola Cua and Marco Gazzi made contributions to the Tatura Irrigation and Wartime Camps Museum including their oral testimonies and a copy of Vittorio Tolaini's book *Voyage of an Alien. The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, editors David Cesarani and Tony Kushner featured a contribution by Rando Bertoia.

Canzone dei 200, the Dunera Italians ensures that the 200 Italian survivors of the *Arandora Star* tragedy have a documented history. Their internment journey was long, traumatic and arduous. The pieces of this historical puzzle have been pieced together to honour the 200 UK Italian internees who were reluctant residents in Australia during World War 2.

Acknowledgements

The inspiration and impetus for this research was *Gioventù Numero di Natale* 25 December 1940; it is a 'snapshot' of life in an internment camp in Australia.

Donated by Giovanna Gordon, daughter of Giovanni Baldelli, to the *Museo Nazionale della Emigrazione Italiana*, (MEI) Genoa, Italy, its existence raised a number of questions. Did other copies of *Gioventù* survive? Why has very little been written about this group of Italian internees held in Australian camps? Did any other relics for this history survive? What is the story for the men whose names appeared on the pages of *Gioventù*? I am therefore extremely indebted to Giovanna Gordon for bringing to light this history through her donation, and to Giorgia Barzetti from MEI for piquing my interest.

It has taken a community to answer my questions and a collaborative effort to document the journey of the 200 Italians from the United Kingdom who were interned in Australia during WW2.

I am sincerely appreciative to all those who have become part of the *Dunera Italians'* project donating their time, photos, film, documents and insight.

Anna Chiappa (Canada), Dr Terri Colpi (Scotland), Peter Capella (England), Alfonso Pacitti (Scotland), Alan Morgenroth (England), Sue Schmitke (Australia) and Elizabeth Triarico (Australia) have provided valuable insight through the sharing of information, and with their guidance, pointed me in the right direction.

Louise Burke (Australia), Emma Kuhles (England) and Julian Scola (Belgium) have been my studious Beta Readers and they have seen what I couldn't.

Giovanni Baldelli (England) is central to my journey for he not only kept safe the 1940 Christmas edition of *Gioventù* but he also shared *Canzone dei Due Cento* with Alfio Bernabei during the filming of the documentary *Dangerous Characters – The Arandora Star Tragedy*. Thank you Giovanni Baldelli, for leaving a bread crumb trail, so that this history could be discovered, and recovered.

I am also grateful to the family of Giorgio Scola (England) for sharing Giorgio's diary. Giorgio kept a journal documenting his internment journey, so thank you Giorgio for providing a much needed personal perspective.

Finally, a special thank you to Alfio Bernabei (England) for his quiet encouragement which allowed me to believe that this research was possible.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The 200 Dunera Italians

Name: Occupation: Country of Arrest

Accini, Dino; Café Owner, England.

Albericci, Angelo; Head Waiter, England.

Albericci, Santo; Waiter, England.

Alonzi, Antonio; Mosaic Worker, Wales.

Amato, Francesco; Hairdresser, England.

Andreucci, Arcangelo; Ice Cream Merchant, England.

Antinori, Ivaldo Cleland; University Student, Scotland.

Apicella, Francesco; Café Proprietor, England.

Baccanello, Ugo; Freight Broker, England.

Baldelli, Giovanni; School Master, England.

Barbieri, Luigi; Fish Restaurateur, Scotland.

Barbuti, Pietro; Café Proprietor, Wales.

Barovero, Giacomo; Wine Butler, England.

Barsotti, Carlo; Restaurant Proprietor, Scotland.

Becci, Luigi; Café Proprietor, Scotland.

Bechelli, Vittorio; Fish Restaurateur, Scotland.

Belloni, Giuseppe Achille; Provisions Merchant, England.

Belloni, Paolo; Waiter, England.

Berni, Antonio; Caterer, England.

Berni, Giovanni; Waiter, England.

Bertoia, Nilo Rando; Terrazzo Layer, Scotland.

Bertoluzzi, Virginio; Produce-Provision Merchant England.

Bertorelli, Lodovico; Restaurant Proprietor, England.

Bertuzzi, Armando; Waiter, England.

Beschizza, Luigi; Caterer, England.

Beschizza, Pietro Andrea; Waiter, England.

Beschizza, Sisto; Café Proprietor, England.

Biagi, Guglielmo; Shop Proprietor, Scotland.

Biagioni, Giovanni; Shop Keeper, Scotland.

Bianchi, Ettore; Hotel Exchange/Head Waiter, England.

Biasoni, Angelo; Accountant, Wales.

Boggio, Giorgio; Doctor of Economics/Professor, England.

Bonelli, Ugo Achille; Purchasing Agent, England.

Borghi, Giovanni; Assistant General Manager, England.

Borzoni, Dorando; Café Proprietor, England.

Bravo, Eusebio; Pastry Chef, England.

Bruni, Caio Marcel; Cable Worker, England.

Bruno, Giovanni; Travel Clerk, England.

Cabrelli, Pietro; Restaurant Owner, Scotland.

Caira, Michele; Restaurant Proprietor, England.

Calderoni, Bartolomeo; Chef, England.

Capra, Francesco; Boarding Housekeeper, England.

Cappuccini, Luigi; Cafe Proprietor, England.

Casali, Cesare; Café Proprietor/Ice Merchant, England.

Casci, Enrico [Henry]; Café Worker, Scotland.

Cavaciuti, Antonio; Stone Mason, England.

Cavanna, Antonio; Restaurant Proprietor, Wales.

Cavina, Fortunato; Café Proprietor, Wales.

Cenci, Domenico; Café Proprietor, England.

Chiocconi, Romolo; Café Proprietor, Scotland.

Cima, Amilcare; Shopkeeper/Cafe Proprietor, Scotland.

Ciuffardi, Realdo; Shopkeeper/Café Proprietor, Scotland.

Cocozza, Gabriele; Shopkeeper, Scotland.

Coia, Michele; Shop Keeper, Scotland.

Coli, Angelo Paolo; Grocer, Scotland.

Coltelli, Adolfo; Café Proprietor, England.

Cordani, Ernesto; Fish Café Owner. Wales.

Corinti, Venuto; Chef, England.

Corna, Santo; Button Machine Operator, England

Consoli, Giuseppe Giovanni; Button Dye Expert, England.

Costan, Giuseppe; Restaurateur, England.

Croci, Mario; Ice Cream Vendor, Scotland.

Crolla, Giovanni; Restaurant Proprietor, Scotland.

Crolla, Giuseppe; Wholesaler, Scotland.

Cua, Giovanni; Restaurant Cook, England.

Cua, Nicola; Salesman, England.

D'Agostino, Antonio; Sculptor/Wood Carver, England.

Dallanegra, Antonio; Shopkeeper, Wales.

D'Ambrosio, Giovanni; Shop Proprietor, Scotland.

Di Ciacca, Luigi; Shopkeeper, Scotland.

Di Rollo, Antonio Angelo; Restaurant Proprietor, Scotland.

Di Rollo, Giuseppe; Billiard Room Proprietor, Scotland.

Di Rollo, Vittorio; Confectioner, Scotland.

Divito, Crescenzo; Refreshment Bar, Scotland.

Dorà, Giuseppe; Fish Café Proprietor, Scotland.

Edoni, Alessandro; Shopkeeper, Scotland.

Enrione, Favorino; Waiter, England.

Fagiano, Michele; Head Waiter, England.

Felloni, Adolfo; Terrazzo Layer, Scotland.

Felloni, Giulio; Marble/Mosaic Worker, Scotland.

Ferrari, Giuseppe; Commercial Traveller, England.

Ferrarin, Sisto; Mosaic Worker, England.

Ferrucci, Rizzieri; Bar Man, England.

Foligno, Giuseppe; Café Proprietor, Wales.

Forte, Rocco; Milk Bar Proprietor, Scotland.
Fortura, Enrico; Shopkeeper, Scotland.
Francescon, Guglielmo; Mosaic Worker, England.
Franchetti, Bernardo; Stone Mason, Scotland.
Freppoli, Riccardo; Ice Salesman/Car Man, England.
Fulgoni, Luigi; Café Proprietor, Wales.
Galante, Antonio; Rubber Cable Worker, England.
Galante, Emilio; Cable Maker, England.
Galbiati, Guido; Head Waiter, England.
Gallinari, Vito; Car-man, England.
Gallo, Pietro; Independent, England.
Gamberini, Giulio; Waiter, England.
Gauna, Celeste; Chef, England.
Gazzano, Giovanni; Waiter, England.
Gazzi, Marco; Café Manager, Wales.
Ghisoni, Angelo; Driver, England.
Giovine, Ugolino; Chef, England.
Gonnella, Guido; Waiter, England.
Greco, Antonio; Biscuit Manufacturer, England.
Greco, Angelo; Caterer, Wales.
Guarnieri, Gino; Restaurant Proprietor, England.
Guido, Ermenegildo; Head Waiter, England.
Guidobaldi, Filippo; Cine Technician, England.
Imondi, Alberto; Provision Merchant, England.
Jaconelli, Louis; Ladies' Hairdresser, Scotland.
Jannetta, Fortunato; Confectioner, Scotland.
Jannetta, Luigi; Shopkeeper, Scotland.
Jannetta, Sabatino; Shop Owner, Scotland.
Lembo, Giuseppe Fruit and Produce Importer, England.

Lombardelli, Riccardo; Restaurant Proprietor, England.

Lucchesi, Pietro; Commercial Traveller, England.

Lusardi, Giovanni; Shopkeeper, Wales.

Lusardi, Giuseppe; Confectioner, Wales.

Maciocia, Alberto; Mechanic and Shopkeeper, Scotland.

Manzocchi, Gerolamo; Doctor, England.

Marioni, Attilio; Restaurant Proprietor, England.

Mariutto, Pietro; Mosaic Cement Worker, England.

Martinez, Carlo; Electrical Engineer, England.

Martinez, Giuseppe; Company Director, England.

Massarelli, Riccardo; Accountant, England.

Matania, Francesco; Music Teacher Professor, England.

Mattiussi, Francesco; Shopkeeper, England.

Mazzina, Francesco; Head Waiter, England.

Mazzolini, Renzo; Shopkeeper/Restaurateur, Scotland.

Minchella, Luigi; Mosaic Worker, Scotland.

Moccogni, Giovanni; Cafe Proprietor, Scotland.

Moccogni, Pietro; Waiter/Fish Restaurateur, Scotland.

Molinari, Germano; Restaurant Proprietor, England.

Montini, Giuseppe; Valet, England.

Moruzzi, Giuseppe; Caterer, Wales.

Moruzzi, Giovanni; Lorry Driver, England.

Moscardini, Pietro; Shopkeeper, Scotland.

Nazzari, Arturo; Head Waiter, England.

Negri, Giovanni Pietro; Chef, England.

Notarianni, Carlo; Shopkeeper/Cafe Proprietor, England.

Notarianni, Ostilio; Café Proprietor, England.

Novello, Elia; Head Waiter, England.

Orlandi, Giovannibattista; Café Proprietor, Scotland.

Osmetti, Giovanni; Bank Clerk, England.

Pacitti, Alessandro; Café Proprietor, Scotland.

Pacitti, Pasquale; Terrazzo Worker, England.

Papa, Marcello Alessandro; Shopkeeper, Scotland.

Pardini, Corinto; Shopkeeper, Scotland.

Parravicini, Felice; Restaurant Proprietor, England.

Pelosi, Giuseppe; Caterer, Wales.

Pieroni, Annibale; Shop Assistant, Scotland.

Pillon, Pietro; Rubber Cable Production Manager, England.

Pinagli, Primo; Café Proprietor, England.

Pini, Andrea; Shop Manager, England.

Pini, Manfredo; Ice Merchant, England.

Pini, Raffaele; Company Director, England.

Pini, Serafino; Café Proprietor, England.

Poggioli, Luigi; Restaurant Proprietor, England.

Politi, Ennio; Restaurant Proprietor, Scotland.

Previdi, Emilio; Dairyman & Provision Merchant, England.

Rabaiotti, Antonio; Café Proprietor, Wales.

Rabaiotti, Bartolomeo; Storekeeper/Cafe Proprietor, Wales.

Rabaiotti, Francesco; Café Proprietor, Wales.

Rabaiotti, Mario; Café Proprietor, Wales.

Radice, Rinaldo; Shopkeeper, England.

Rengozzi, Pietro; Café Proprietor, Wales.

Riani, Colombo; Musician, Ice Cream Café Owner, England.

Roscelli, Giuseppe; Café Proprietor, England.

Rosi, Lodovico; Café Proprietor, England.

Rosselli, Lorenzo; Restaurant Proprietor, Scotland

Rossi, Decio; Dress Designer, England.

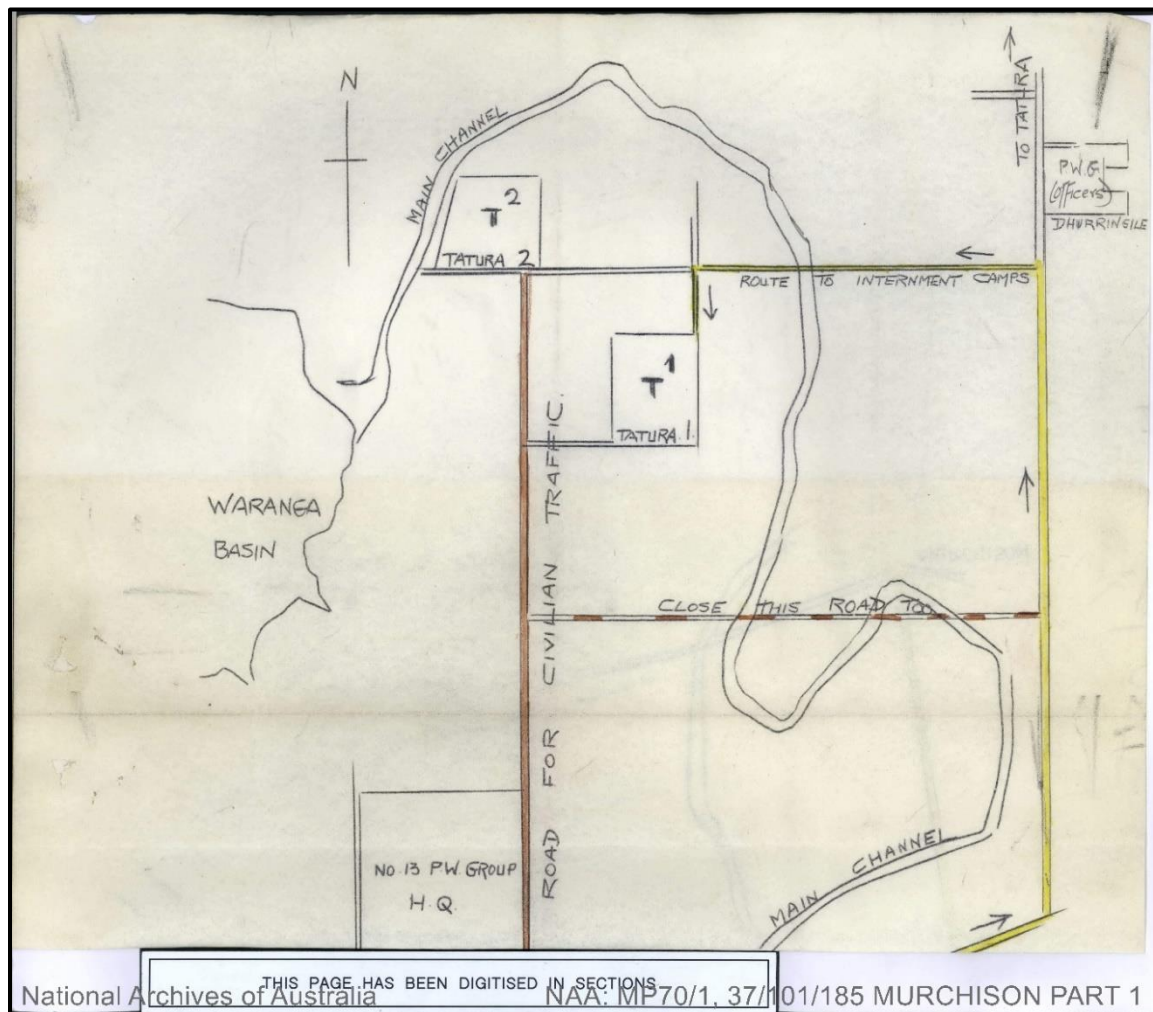
Rossi, Emilio; Restaurant Clerk, England.

Rossi, Giuseppe; Café Proprietor, Wales.
Roveta, Libero; Restaurateur, England.
Saccomani, Antonio; Baker, England.
Salmi, Giuseppe; Café Proprietor, Wales.
Sampietro, Emilio; Head Waiter, England.
Saporiti, Giuseppe; Shopkeeper, England.
Sartor, Vittorio; Mosaic Worker, England.
Scaravelli, Umberto; Perfumery Agent/Hairdresser, England.
Schiavi, Dante; Café Proprietor, England.
Scola, Giorgio; Student of Architecture, England.
Servini, Celeste; Café Proprietor, Wales.
Servini, Lino; Restaurant Owner, Wales.
Sidoli, Antonio; Shopkeeper/Cafe Proprietor, England.
Simonelli, Ernesto; Head Waiter, England.
Spaggiari, Giuseppe; Manager Ice Factory, England.
Stefani, Santino; Café Owner, Scotland.
Sterlini, Angelo; Restaurant Proprietor, England.
Strina, Pietro; Cook, England.
Strola, Leandro; Restaurant Proprietor, England.
Terroni, Andrea; Café Proprietor, England.
Toffolo, Iginio; Terrazzo Foreman, England.
Tolaini, Pacifico Vittorio; Café Owner, England.
Tome, Giovanni; Mosaic Worker, Scotland.
Tome, Osvaldo; Mosaic Worker, Scotland.
Ugolini, Orlando; Shopkeeper, Scotland.
Ugolini, Ugo; Journalist, England.
Vergano, Sisto Luigi; Maître Chef, England.
Zaninetta, Giuseppe; Restaurateur, England.
Zezi, Gaetano; Doctor, England.

Appendix 2: Internment Camps for the Dunera Italians in Australia



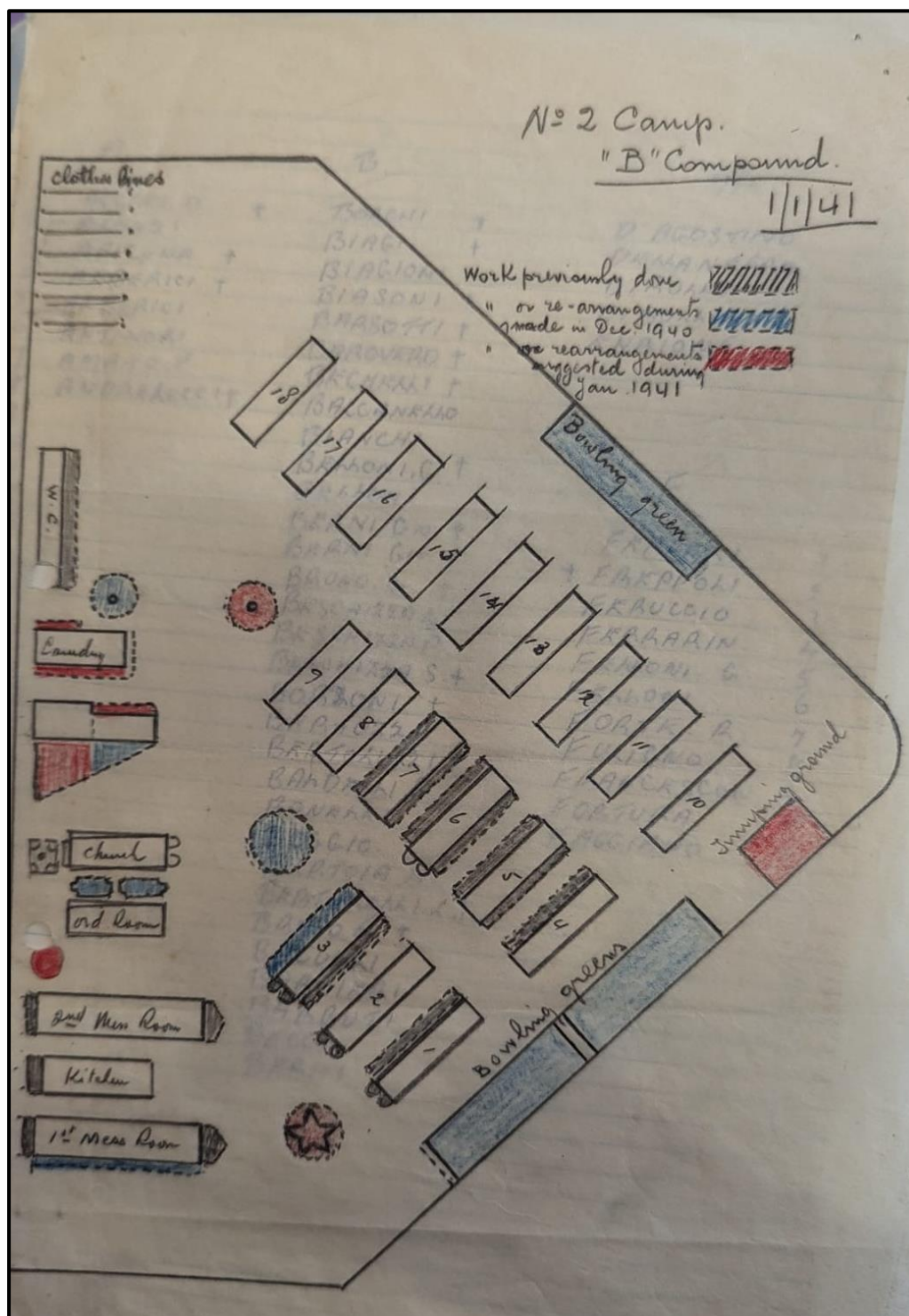
Appendix 3: Prisoner of War and Internment Camps east of Waranga Basin¹⁴⁸



Tatura Camp 2 was situated NE of the Waranga Basin, Victoria. On the eastern side of the Waranga Basin were four camps: No 13 Prisoner of War Camp consisting of 4 compounds built to house 1000 per compound; Tatura Internment Camp 1 was built to accommodate 1100 with Camp A being larger in size than Camp B; adjacent to the eastern side of the camp was the 28 Australian Camp Hospital which serviced all camps in the district; Tatura Camp 2 with 2 compounds each to accommodate 550; Dhurringile Masion which was repurposed to take 200 German Officer Prisoners of War and their batmen.

¹⁴⁸ Intelligence Reports – Murchison, 1942-1944, NAA:MP70/1, 37/101/185 Murchison Part 1, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Appendix 4: Tatura Camp 2B 1 January 1941¹⁴⁹



Drawn to show Tatura Camp 2B on 1 January 1941, this diagram illustrates the configuration of buildings and their purpose. It also highlights the work completed in the grounds of the camp and the proposed work for January 1941.

¹⁴⁹ Vittorio Tolaini and Nicola Cua, *No. 2 Camp B Compound 1/1/41*, 1990.

Appendix 5: The Arandora Star Song

Translation by Wilma Stark.¹⁵⁰

*Early that July morning
Before e'en the break of day
On still dark waves swiftly onwards
She silently stole us away*

*Away from the firesides
All we Italian men
Heading for who know where
Torn from our kith and kin.*

*Each man was cold and trembling
Unable to understand
As the 'Arandora' sped onwards
Toward some far off land*

*Then an almighty explosion
Suddenly blew us away
Sounding the knell for many
On that cold and terrible day.*

*Up top and down below
Each man, 'alien' or 'friend'
With stricken hearts and trembling limbs
Knew the 'Star' was near her end.*

*The lifeboats were lowered
Too few for so many men
The Captain's words to all
'Save yourselves – all who can'.*

*Down, down she went to the bottom
Our brothers down, down to the deep
Some praying, some cursing the Gods above
All bound for a cold, cold sleep*

*And we still above on the water
Tears falling down on the waves
And the bodies of our Brothers
Whom no-one now could save.*

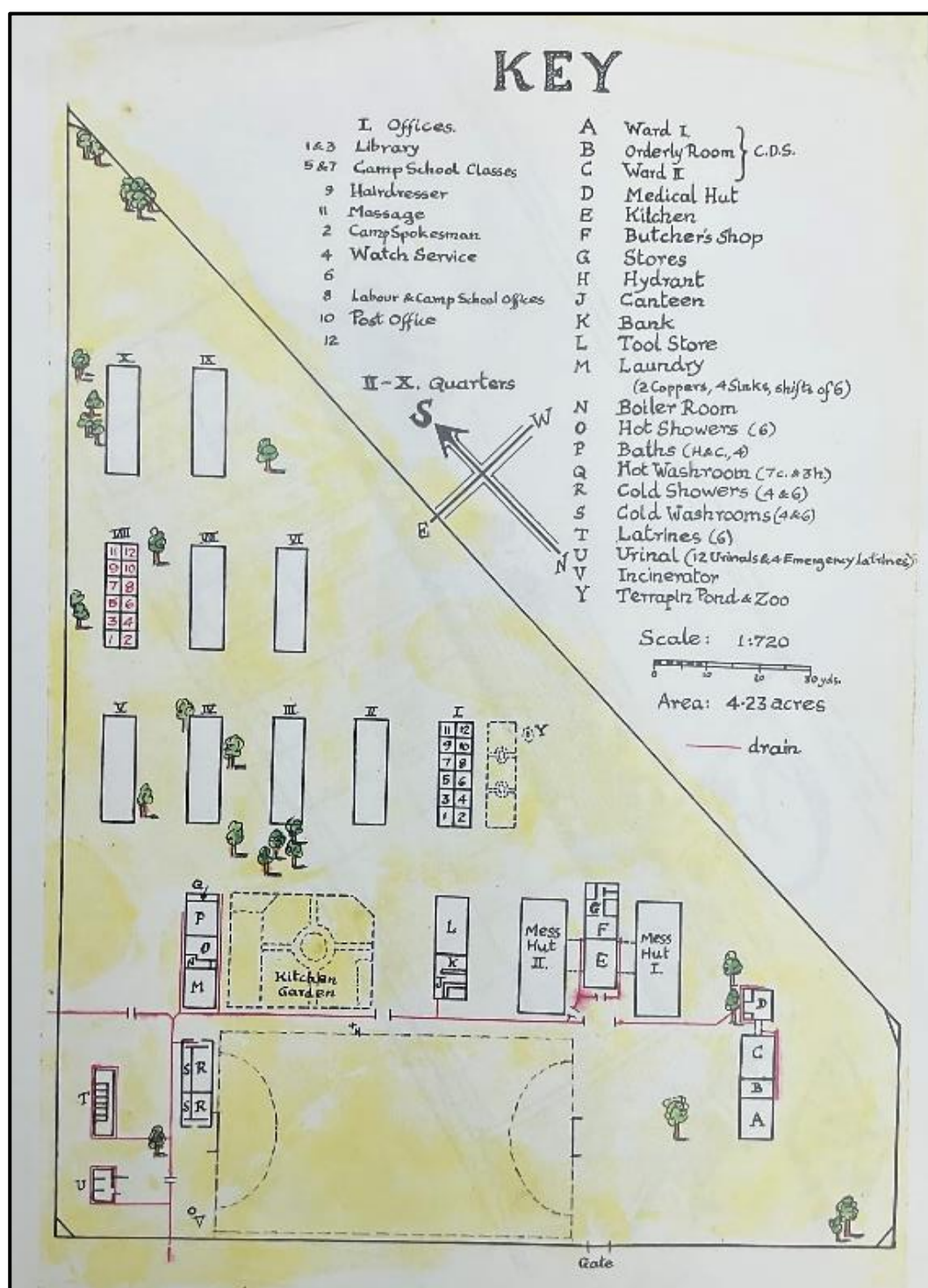
*We prayed to the Good Lord above us
Each man, friend or foe
And out of the skies came an angel
A reward for our Faith there below.*

*Gathered up by the warm hands
Of Torpedo-Boat H83
An act of Brotherhood
Snatched us from the sea.*

*(Dedicated to all who died, and survived.
Including Family and friends left behind, and
those transported in the 'Ettrick', to Canada)*

150 Alfio Bernabei, *Italian Scottish Identities and Connections* 15, 67.

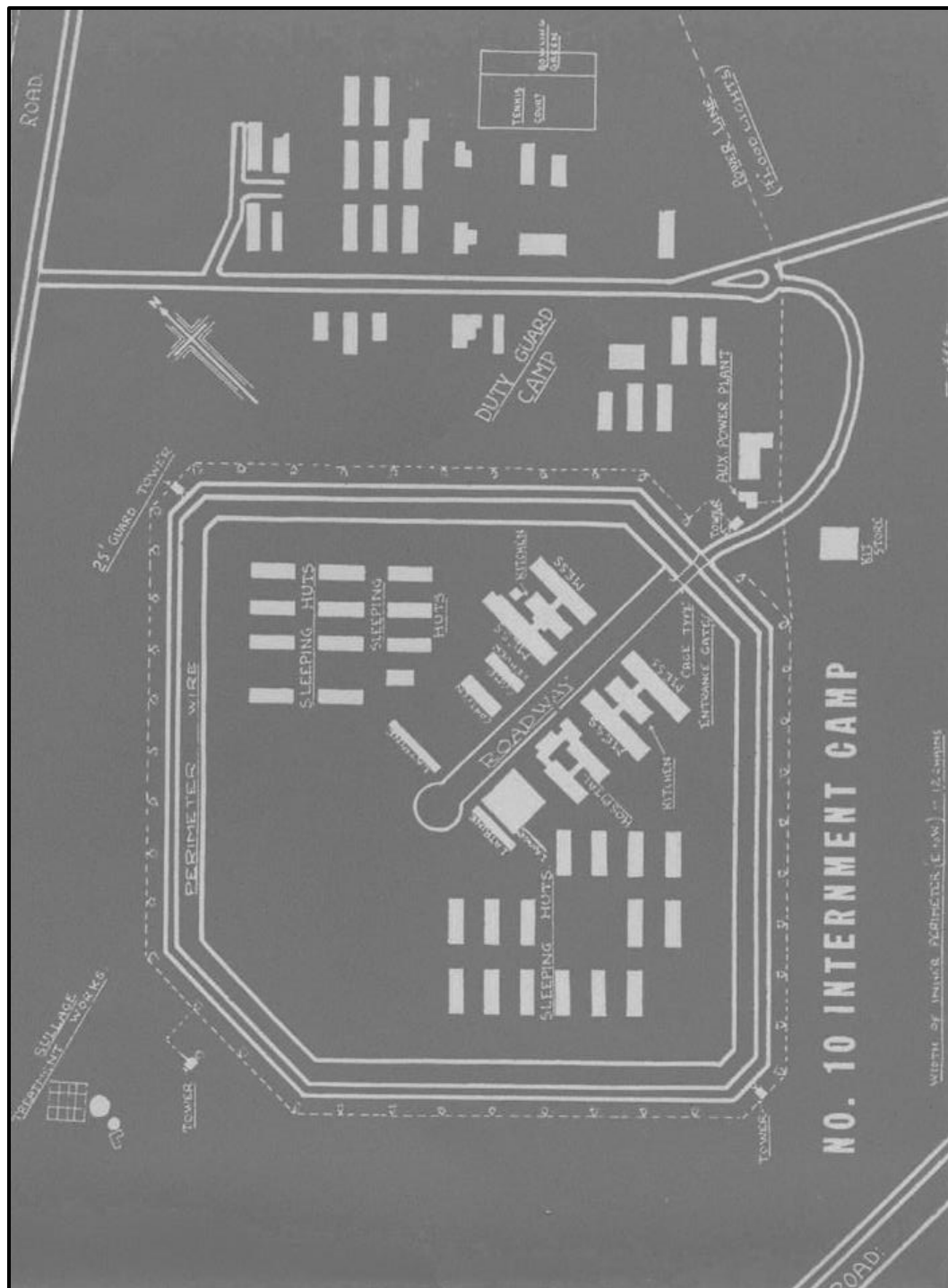
Appendix 6: Tatura Camp 4¹⁵¹



Camp 4 was constructed as a family camp with four compounds each to house 250 mixed sexes. It was hexagonal in shape and was situated at the western side of the Waranga Basin. This diagram of Camp 4D was drawn by Eli Rosenbluth and shows the layout which was replicated for each compound.

151 Eli Rosenbluth, *Collection of Eli Rosenbluth*, MLMSS 11735, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

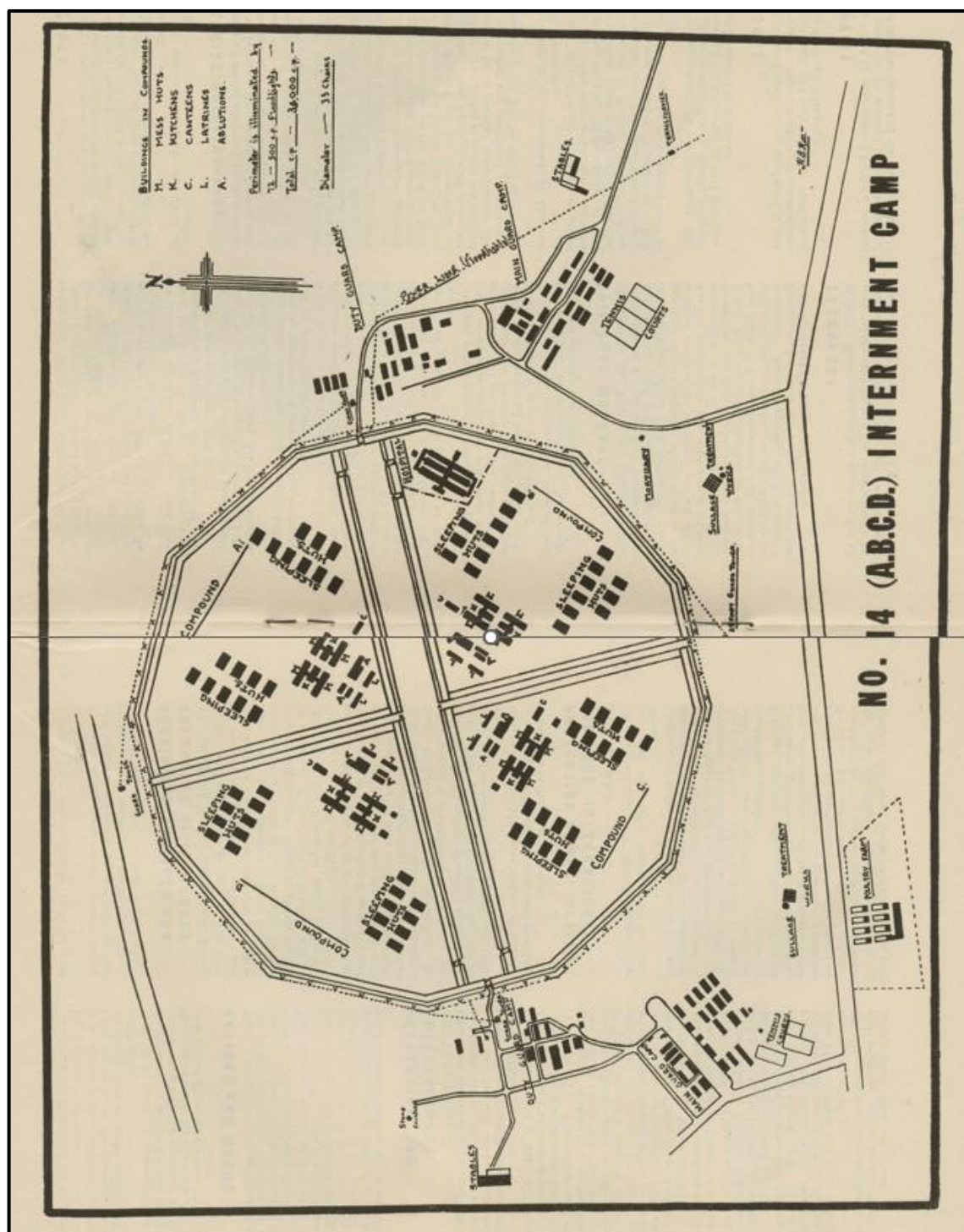
Appendix 7: Loveday Camp 10¹⁵²



Loveday Camps were situated east of Loveday and south of Barmera. Loveday Camp 10 was situated in the vicinity of the intersection of Yeo Road and Thiele Road, south of Barmera, South Australia. Loveday Camp 9 was a mile and a half further east along Thiele Road in the vicinity of Swinstead Road.

¹⁵² Committee appointed to record the History of Internment in South Australia, *Internment in South Australia: a history of Loveday, Loveday internment group Barmera, 1940-1946*, 1946, The Advertiser Printing Office, Adelaide, 23.

Appendix 8: Loveday Camp 14¹⁵³



Loveday Camp 14 was situated a mile and a half west from Loveday Camp 10, on the site of what was the Loveday Aerodrome.

153 Committee. *Internment in South Australia*. The Advertiser Printing Office, 1946, 16-17.

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Endnotes

- ⁱ This figure differs from c. 18,000 to 24,000. Dr Terri Colpi records that there were over 20,000 Italians in Great Britain at the time. Maria Serena Balestracci records that c. 19,000 Italians lived in Great Britain and 4000 were arrested.
- ⁱⁱ Lord Snell's report is dated 24 October 1940. It was a 'secret' document to be kept under lock and key.
- ⁱⁱⁱ A main contributing factor which is often emphasised for the tragedy of the *Arandora Star* was the number of people onboard c. 1700. Her peace time passenger numbers were 354. As a comparison of a passenger ship conversion to troopship, the *Queen Mary* during peace time accommodated 2552 passengers in August 1939. In July 1943, the *Queen Mary* carried the greatest number of people on a floating vessel: 15,740 troops and 943 crew.
- ^{iv} Alfonso Pacitti completed extensive research into the numbers of Italian internees onboard the *Arandora Star* and his fully validated 'Embarkation Listing' has been published in *Modern Italy Journal* October 2024.
- ^v The German seamen were accommodated initially in the Ballroom. Due their display of Nazi emblems, singing of Nazi songs and their proximity to the steering arrangements, a movement of Germans and Italians was actioned. This movement created chaos and boat drills were postponed.
- ^{vi} There were shortcomings in the compilation of the Embarkation Lists "Arandora Star" Sailed 30 June 1940. Twenty *Dunera* Italian internees were listed as 'lost' and three *Dunera* Italian internees did not appear on the list. There were also numerous duplications and spelling errors. Many had 'unknown' listed as their Camp of Origin. This list was retrospectively compiled; after the rescue of the "Arandora Star" survivors. The lists were not finalized until April 1941.
- ^{vii} It is likely Gino's friends went to the Brazilian Embassy, by then responsible for Italians as the Italian Embassy had been closed.
- ^{viii} Colonel Giovanni Borghi had assumed a leadership role for the Italians as early as the *Arandora Star*. Captain Robertson, interpreter for the British Guard on the *Arandora Star*, related that Colonel Borghi was an invaluable support in quartering and messing the Italians and then also reallocation of the Italians to different areas of the ship due to problems with the Germans in the Ballroom.
- ^{ix} Numbers are varied dependent upon the availability of documents and accuracy of documents. The numbers continue to be adjusted as new information is accessed.
- ^x Giovanni Borghi aka John Borghi, is referenced as Colonel Borghi. He was referred to by Nicola Cua as Colonel Borghi and Captain FJ Robertson, interpreter on the SS *Arandora Star* referred to him as Tenente Colonelle Borghi. In *Gioventù* No. 14, the Tatura Camp magazine he is mentioned as Il Sig. Colonello Borghi.
- ^{xi} This game was more likely to have been 'Morra', a hand game that dates back thousands of years to ancient Roman and Greek times. Each player simultaneously reveals their hand, extending any number of fingers, and calls out a number. Any player who successfully guesses the total number of fingers revealed by all players combined scores a point.

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- xii Captain Margesson, Minister for War, Great Britain, used the term 'Dunera Scandal' in the House of Commons as was reported in July 1941. Cyril Pearl in 1983 published his book under the title of *The Dunera Scandal*.
- xiii The *Dunera* went on to serve admirably during WW2: Operation Husky and the invasion of Sicily 1943, landing US Army staff in the invasion of the south of France 1944 and the reoccupation of Burma and Malaya in 1945.
- xiv Bruno Breyer, Robert Braun, Gerhardt Edel, Oskar Fischl, Franz Geier, Emil Grossheim, Fritz Dichter, Gustav Schindler, Heinz Otto Tandler, Dr Dirk De Rooy and Dr Augustin Schiehse were sent to Broadmeadows Hospital. George Deek, Paul Fuchs and George Schroen were taken to a Melbourne Hospital.
- xv Initially, the walls of the barracks did not go to the eaves, chicken wire was installed in the gap between walls and eaves. This was seen as important for ventilation. In time, the walls were taken to the top and windows installed.
- xvi Luigi Vergano helped re-open Quaglino's in London post war.
- xvii Giovanni Baldelli published poetry books in Italian, French and English. He was a regular contributor to "Freedom" an anarchism magazine during 1950s and 1960s. His published plays were not well received but his book "Social Anarchism" published in 1971 and republished in 2009 was. "Social Anarchism" defines social anarchism and provides a framework for its introduction and remains a major contributor to anarchist literature.
- xviii Possibly he questioned under whose authority was he now interned in Australia.
- xix Dr Georges Morel, representative for the International Committee for the Red Cross, visited the internment and prisoner of war camps. He wrote comprehensive reports for each visit. The details in 'The Basics' have been taken from the various reports written for Tatura Camp 2.
- xx Nice was ceded to France in 1860 by the Kingdom of Sardinia in exchange for French support for the unification of Italy.
- xxi Might there have been a metaphorical connection to 'Christ Walking on the Sea of Galilee and the 'Dunera' Italians who had been saved after the sinking of the 'Arandora Star'. In those nine or so desperate hours waiting for rescue, the men would have said their prayers and waited for a miracle.
- xxii Gabriele Cocozza had two daughters. One daughter was living in Scotland with her mother and the other daughter was living in Italy with her grandparents.
- xxiii Translated from Italian to English with DeepL.com
- xxiv Translated from Italian to English with DeepL.com
- xxv Giorgio Scola was not a Catholic, but his observations about Catholic rituals acknowledge that he knew the importance of the Rosary for the 98.5% of Dunera Italians who were Catholic.
- xxvi Lady Duff Gordon, her husband Sir Cosmo Duff Gordon and their maid, Laura Mabel Francatelli were survivors of the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1911.
- xxvii Dr Terri Colpi states in 'Chaff in the winds of war?' that it was not until April 1941 that the Home Office Missing List was finalised.
- xxviii The exception being 400 men who were sent to Orange Internment camp suffering and recuperating from chronic tonsillitis; some with diseased tonsils which might have required future operations. The other concerns were Scarlet Fever and Rheumatic Fever as a consequence of chronic tonsillitis.

xxix The espresso machine was capable of making 12 cups of coffee separately in 60 seconds.

xxx Other Italian internees to join the 8th Labour Battalion were: Guiseppe Gargiulo, hairdresser captured in Singapore; Gaston Castro, bank clerk/foreign correspondent captured in Singapore; Emilio Mocenigo, Sailor/Shoe Maker captured in Kuching Borneo; Luigi Urdich, Steam Engine Machinist captured in Siam; Ezio Neri, Musician captured in Singapore. All arrived in Sydney Australia on the *Queen Mary* 25 September 1940 and were sent directly to Tatura Camp 3.

xxxi Threats of torture with 'manganello' and castor oil were not idle threats. The manganello – bludgeon and castor oil were known tactics of the fascists and were feared.

xxxii In support of how dangerous fascists elements were in camps are the following deaths in Australian camps. Francesco Fantin (Australian resident internee) died as a result of an injury sustained in Loveday Camp 14A on 16 November 1942. Fantin was an anarchist and a fervent anti-fascist. Pasquale Mancuso and Nicola Francavilla (Italian prisoners of war) received fatal injuries in Hay Camp 7 on 10 July 1944. A knife fight had erupted between the Fascists and the Royalists.

xxxiii 28 Australian Camp Hospital (28 ACH) Waranga was the hospital established for the prisoner of war and internee camps in the Murchison and Tatura districts. It was staffed by Army doctors and nurses with maternity facilities and TB isolation wards.

xxxiv The *Overseas Internees Investigation Board* comprised of Justice Hutchins, Home Office Representative Lieutenant-Colonel Layton, Intelligence Service Representatives Major TN Buesst and Major JL Benjamin and Security Services Representative Captain CF Sexton.

xxxv Giovanni Gazzano, Giuseppe Crolla and Alessandro Pacitti survived the sinking of the *SS Waroonga* on 4 April 1943 as did German internees Stefan Vajda and Jakob Steinhof. Internees Hans Baer, Louis Biber, Ludwig Gelles, Lazarus Ressler and Max Koenigsberg perished.

xxxvi The 1941 *Arandora Star* Monument at Tatura Camp 3 was most likely the first memorial for those who lost their lives on 2 July 1940.

xxxvii Ganora, his wife and eldest daughter had been residents of Tatura Camp 3 and came with their own internment story. Yet Ganora was vehemently opposed to his daughter's relationship with Luigi Beschizza, also an ex-internee.

xxxviii Elio Poli was not sent to Australia as he was sent to the Mearnskirk Hospital then transferred to Granville Camp on the Isle of Man.

xxxix Santi Stefani had returned to Italy, and while he was still living at the time, he was overlooked for this prestigious award.

Joanne Tapiolas is an independent researcher, an ex- history teacher and high school Deputy Principal, a family historian and business owner. The granddaughter of Catalan and Veneto migrants, she has an intimate understanding of displacement, prejudice and living in an unfamiliar world. Her passion for family history and insight into social history has inspired Australians and Italians from around the world, to become part of her projects and share their stories.

Her works include:

Walking in their Boots, Footprints of Italian Prisoners of War in Queensland WW2 (2017)

From Desert Sands to the Dry Tropics, History of the Home Hill Italian Prisoners of War Camp 1944-1945 (2019)

Costanzo Melino, Son of Anzano (co-authored with Rosa Melino 2019)

Italian Prisoners of War in Victoria, A snapshot 1941-1947 (2023)

Per non dimenticare, In memory of 'Australian Italian internees and prisoners of war who died during WW2 (2024)

italianprisonersofwar.com (2018 -)

theduneraitalians.com (2025-)

S.S. Dunera—List No. 2.

Name	No.	Name	No.
G			
Giovine, Ugolino	—	Montini, Giuseppe	5824
Greco, Antonio	59626	Moruzzi, Giuseppe	5846
Gallinari, Vito	375	Moruzzi, Giovanni	—
Gazzano, Giovanni	336	Matania, Francesco	58200
Gamberini, Giulio	58312	N	
Guarnieri, Gino	449		
Gonnella, Guido	58243	Notarianni, Carlo	—
Gallo, Pietro	—	Nazzari, Arturo	122
Guidobaldi, Filippo	455	Negri, Giovanni	40311
Gauna, Celeste	363	Notarianni, Ostilio	40302
Galbiati, Guido	58342	Novello, Elia	404
Greco, Angelo	58539		
Guido, Ermenegildo	—		
Ghisoni, Angelo	40308	Osmetti, Giovanni	58052
Galante, Antonio	40340	Orlando, Giovanni	—
Galante, Emilio	—		
I		P	
Imondi, Alberto	—	Pacitti, Alessandro	58697
J		Poggioni, Luigi	—
Jannetta, Sabatino	—	Pardini, Corinto	—
Jaconelli, Louis	—	Parravicini, Felice	427
Jannetta, Fortunato	—	Pisani, Pietro	—
Janetta, Luigi	—	Politi, Ennio	14606
L		Pini, Serafino	58075
Lembo, Giuseppe	58350	Pini, Raffaele	—
Lusardi, Giovanni	58664	Papa, Marcello	14561
Lusardi, Giuseppe	58653	R	
Lucchesi, Pietro	44273	Roscelli, Giuseppe	58116
Lombardelli, Riccardo	40317	Rengozzi, Pietro	—
M		Rossi, Emilio	58293
Moccogni, Giovanni	14610	Rosselli, Lorenzo	14704
Mazzina, Francesco	58043	Rosi, Ludovico	58203
Minchella, Luigi	—	Rabaiotti, Francesco	58672
Maciocia, Alberto	—	Rabaiotti, Antonio	58532
Moscardini, Pietro	—	Roveta, Libero	5818
Mattinuzzi, Francesco	—	Radice, Rinaldo	58098
Molinari, Germano	40304	Rabaiotti, Bartolomeo	58795
Moccogni, Pietro	—	Rabaiotti, Mario	—
Manzocchi, Gerolamo	58095	Rossi, Giuseppe	58572
Martinez, Carlo	4321	Rossi, Decio	58307
Martinez, Giuseppe	4322	Riani, Colombo	59473
Marioni, Attilio	58274		
Mariutto, Pietro	442		
Massarelli, Riccardo	58246		
Mazzolini, Renzo	14714		

The 10 June 1940 changed the lives of thousands of Italians living outside of Italy. With Benito Mussolini's declaration of war with France and England, these Italians were declared 'enemy aliens' with consequence of arrest and internment.

For 200 Italians living in England, Scotland and Wales, their internment would take them 12,000 miles from the United Kingdom to Australia.

Canzone dei 200 follows these Italians from their arrest, internment in UK, rescue after the sinking of the *Arandora Star*, the journey on the *Dunera* to Australia and life behind the barbed wire in Tatura Camps, Victoria and Loveday Camps, South Australia.

For these 200 Italians, their journey is one of heartache, survival, endurance and resilience.